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SCHILLER'S HISTORICAL DRAMAS.

"Schiller is the *Æschylus* of Germany, the loftiest of her tragic poets."—*Taylor (of Norwich)*.

"Schiller was at once fiery and tender; impetuous, soft, affectionate; his enthusiasm clothed the universe with grandeur, and sent his spirit forth to explore its secrets, and mingle warmly in its interests. Thus poetry in Schiller was not one, but many gifts. It was not the 'lean and flashy song' of an ear apt for harmony, combined with a maudlin sensibility, or a mere animal ferocity of passion, and an imagination creative chiefly because unbridled; it was, what true poetry is always, the quintessence of general mental riches, the purified result of strong thought and conception, and of refined as well as powerful emotion. In his writings we behold him a moralist, a philosopher, a man of universal knowledge; in each of the capacities he is great, but also in more; for all that he achieves in these brightened and gilded with the touch of another quality; his maxims, his feelings, his opinions, are transformed from the lifeless shape of didactic truths, into living shapes that address faculties far finer than the understanding."—*Carlyle*.

"With Schiller the imagination and the intellect were so nicely balanced, that one knows not which was the greater; owing, happily, to the extensive range of his studies, it may be said that as the intellect was enriched, the imagination was strengthened. He did not sing 'as the bird sings,' from the mere impulse of song, but he rather selected poetry as the most perfect form for the expression of noble fancies and high thoughts. 'His conscience was his muse.'"—*St. L. L. Botet*.

"The better productions of the German stage have never been made known to us; for by some unfortunate chance the wretched pieces of Kotzebue have found a readier acceptance, or more willing translators, than the sublimity of Goethe, or the romantic strength of Schiller."—*Sir Walter Scott*.

"Schiller's poetical creations have had, beyond the province of art, an immediate effect upon life itself. The mighty charm of his song has not only touched the imaginations of men, but even their consciences; and the fiery zeal with which he entered into conflict with all that is base and vulgar, the holy enthusiasm with which he vindicated the acknowledged rights and the insulted dignity of man, more frequently and victoriously than any before him, make his name illustrious, not only among the poets, but among the noblest sages and heroes, who are dear to mankind."—*Menzel*.

THE WORKS  
OF  
FREDERICK SCHILLER.

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HISTORICAL DRAMAS,  
ETC.

DON CARLOS—MARY STUART.  
THE MAID OF ORLEANS.—THE BRIDE OF MESSINA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

LONDON:  
HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

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1847.

LONDON :  
GEORGE WOODIALL AND SON,  
ANGEL COURT, SKINNER STREET



## P R E F A C E.

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THE present volume forms the third of the Standard Library edition of Schiller's works, and comprises four of his most admired dramas.

DON CARLOS is translated by R. D. Boylan, Esq., and, in the opinion of competent judges, the version is eminently successful. Mr. Theodore Martin kindly assisted the publisher in conducting it through the press, and, it is but justice to state, has enhanced the value of the work by his judicious suggestions. This play, from its great length and difficulty, has been a source of considerable anxiety to the several parties concerned, but, it is hoped, not without a satisfactory result.

MARY STUART is the translation of the late Joseph Mellish, Esq., who appears to have been on terms of intimate friendship with Schiller\*; and mentions, in his preface, that he was commissioned to introduce this tragedy on the English Stage. His version was made from the prompter's copy, before the play was published, and, like Coleridge's *Wallenstein*, contains many passages not found in the printed edition. These curious and interesting morceaux are distinguished by brackets. On the other hand, Mr. Mellish omits many passages which now form part of the printed drama, all of which are added. The translation, as a whole, stands out from its compeers of the time (1800) in almost as marked a degree as Coleridge's *Wallenstein*, and some passages exhibit powers of a high order; a few, however, especially in the earlier scenes, seemed capable of improvement, and these have been revised, but, in deference to the translator, with a very sparing hand.

\* Mr. Mellish was an Etonian, the schoolfellow, and, in after life, the friend and companion of Canning and Frere. With these distinguished scholars he assisted to plan and support that ingenious miscellany the *Mirror*, published at Eton, in 1786-7, by Mr. Charles Knight, father of the present well known publisher. Mr. Mellish, in his maturer years, held the appointment of Consul-General at Hamburgh, and, during that period, acquired the friendship and esteem of many of the German literati, especially Goethe, who has dedicated a poem to him.

THE MAID OF ORLEANS is contributed by Miss Anna Swanwick. Specimens of her translation have already appeared in a volume entitled "Selections from the Dramas of Goethe and Schiller," which obtained the favourable notice of several reviewers. It has been carefully revised for this edition, and is now, for the first time, published complete.

THE BRIDGE OF MESSINA, which has been regarded as the poetical masterpiece of Schiller, and perhaps of all his works presents the greatest difficulties to the translator, is rendered by A. Lodge, Esq., M.A. This version on its first publication, a few years ago, was received with deserved eulogy by several distinguished critics, more especially in the *Examiner* and *Athenæum*, where it formed the subject of elaborate notices. To the present edition has been added Schiller's Essay on the Use of the Chorus in Tragedy, in which the author's favourite theory of the "Ideal of Art" is enforced with great ingenuity and eloquence. This piece has not before appeared in an English dress.

Neither labour nor expense has been spared in the production of the present volume, and scarcely any sale of it, in this popular form, can reimburse the publisher; but, if he should succeed in diffusing among his countrymen a more enlarged appreciation of the beauties of Schiller, he will feel abundantly requited.

The next volume (the fourth) will contain THE ROBBERS, and the remainder of Schiller's dramatic pieces, with some miscellanies.

The fifth volume will comprise the Poems, translated by various hands. Many manuscript translations have already been placed at the disposal of the publisher in an unsolicited and obliging manner, and he takes this occasion to say that he will feel grateful for any addition to his store, reserving to himself, however, the right to select those which he may judge to be the most successful. The names of the translators, excepting in a few instances where they are anonymous, will be affixed

H. G. B.

MAY, 1847.

## ERRATA.

Page 9, line 33, *for fixed, read established, and dele Rome's.*

10, „ 1, *read Rome's fearful laws.*

12, „ 4, *for nightly, read still.*

25, „ 14, *read then you have never loved.*

26, „ 10, *omit him.*

28, „ 13, *for out of, read fly from.*

32, „ 19, *omit me.*

32, „ 22, *prefix and.*

128, „ 15, *for O well enough ! read Yes, of course !*

176, „ 10, *for hear, read heart.*

256, „ 16, *after friends, insert a bracket.*

371, „ 12 *from bottom, read molest us.*

380, „ 3, *read Burgundy ! Do words.*

382, „ 1 *from bottom, read must decide.*

383, „ 10, *for ere, read here.*

414, „ 15, *read pealing.*

In *Mary Stuart* the following passages should have been distinguished by brackets as among those not included in the printed editions. See Preface.

Page 232, line 2 from bottom, etc.

[He ever was an honest man, but weak  
In understanding ; and his subtle comrade,  
Whose faith, obsequious, I never answer'd for,  
Might easily seduce him to write down  
More than he should.]

244, line 1 from bottom,

[Desire you but to know, most gracious Queen,]

248, lines 15, etc.

[Who, in the fairest days of freedom, was  
But thy despised puppet.]

248, lines 22, etc.

[Did then  
Thy people's loyal fealty await  
These Guises' approbation.]

251, line 1 from bottom,

[As sickness flies the health dispensing hand]

258, line 7 from bottom,

[Each remnant of distrust be henceforth banished.]

278, lines 2, etc. from bottom,

[Whose whole figure  
Is false and painted, heart as well as face.]



# DON CARLOS.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PHILIP THE SECOND, <i>King of Spain.</i>	PRIOR of a Carthusian Convent.
DON CARLOS, <i>Prince, Son of Philip.</i>	PAGE of the Queen.
ALEXANDER FARNESSE, <i>Prince of Parma.</i>	DON LOUIS MERCADO, <i>Physician to the Queen.</i>
MARQUIS DE POSA.	ELIZABETH DE VALOIS, <i>Queen of Spain.</i>
DUKE OF ALVA.	INFANTA CLARA FARNESI, <i>a Child three years of age.</i>
COUNT LERMA, <i>Colonel of the Body Guard.</i>	DUCHESS D'OLIVAREZ, <i>principal Attendant on the Queen.</i>
DUKE OF FERIA, <i>Knight of the Golden Fleece.</i>	MARCHIONESSE DE MONDECAR.
DUKE OF MEDINA SINDONIA, <i>Admiral.</i>	PRINCESS EBOLI.
DON RAIMOND DE Taxis, <i>Postmaster General.</i>	COUNTS FUENTES,
DOMINGO, <i>Confessor to the King.</i>	<i>Several Ladies, Nobles, Pages, Officers of the Body Guard, and mute Characters.</i>
GRAND INQUISITOR of Spain.	

## ACT I.

### SCENE I.

*The Royal Gardens in Aranjuez*

CARLOS and DOMINGO.

DOMINGO.

Our pleasant sojourn in Aranjuez  
Is over now, and yet your Highness quits  
These joyous scenes no happier than before.  
Our visit hath been fruitless. O, my Prince,  
Break this mysterious and gloomy silence!  
Open your heart to your own father's heart!  
A monarch never can too dearly buy  
The peace of his own son—his only son

[CARLOS looks on the ground in silence.]

Is there one dearest wish, that bounteous Heaven  
Hath e'er withheld from her most favour'd child?  
I stood beside, when in Toledo's walls  
The lofty Charles received his vassals' homage,  
When conquer'd princes throng'd to kiss his hand,  
And there at once six mighty kingdoms fell

In fealty at his feet:—I stood and mark'd  
The young proud blood mount to his glowing cheek,  
I saw his bosom swell with high resolves,  
His eye, all radiant with triumphant pride,  
Flash through the assembled throng; and that same eye  
Confess'd, "Now am I wholly satisfied!"

[CARLOS turns away.

This silent sorrow, which for eight long moons  
Hath hung its shadows. Prince, upon your brow,—  
The myst'ry of the court, the nation's grief,—  
Hath cost your father many a sleepless night,  
And many a tear of anguish to your mother

CARLOS (*turning hastily round*).

My mother!—Grant, O Heaven, I may forget  
How she became my mother!

DOMINGO.

Gracious Prince!

CARLOS (*passing his hand thoughtfully over his brow*).  
Alas! alas! a fruitful source of woe  
Have mothers been to me. My youngest act,  
When first these eyes beheld the light of day,  
Destroyed a mother.

DOMINGO.

Is it possible,

That this reproach disturbs your conscience, Prince?

CARLOS.

And my new mother! Hath she not already  
Cost me my father's heart? Scarce lov'd at best,  
My claim to some small favour lay in this—  
I was his only child! 'Tis over! She  
Hath blest him with a daughter—and who knows  
What slumbering ills the future hath in store?

DOMINGO.

You jest, my Prince. All Spain adores its Queen.  
Shall it be thought that you, of all the world,  
Alone should view her with the eyes of hate,—  
Gaze on her charms, and yet be coldly wise?  
How, Prince? The loveliest lady of her time,  
A Queen withal, and once your own betrothed?  
No, no, impossible—it cannot be!  
Where all men love, you surely cannot hate.

Carlos could never so belie himself.  
I prithee, Prince, take heed she do not learn,  
That she hath lost her son's regard. The news  
Would pain her deeply.

CARLOS.

Ay, sir! think you so?

DOMINGO.

Your Highness doubtless will remember how,  
At the late tournament in Saragossa,  
A lance's splinter struck our gracious Sire.  
The Queen, attended by her ladies, sat  
High in the centre gallery of the palace,  
And looked upon the fight. A cry arose,  
"The King! he bleeds!" Soon through the general din,  
A rising murmur strikes upon her ear.  
"The Prince—The Prince!" she cries, and forward rushed,  
As though to leap down from the balcony,  
When a voice answer'd. "No, the King himself!"  
"Then send for his physicians!" she replied,  
And straight regain'd her former self-composure.

[*After a short pause*

But you seem wrapp'd in thought?

CARLOS.

In wonder, sir,

That the King's merry confessor should own  
So rare a skill in the romancer's art. [*Austerely.*]  
Yet have I ever heard it said, that those  
Who watch men's looks, and carry tales about,  
Have done more mischief in this world of ours,  
Than the assassin's knife, or poison'd bowl.  
Your labour, sir, hath been but ill-bestow'd;  
Would you win thanks, go seek them of the King.

DOMINGO.

This caution, Prince, is wise. Be circumspect  
With men—but not with every man alike.  
Repel not friends and hypocrites together;  
I mean you well, believe me!

CARLOS.

Say you so?

Let not my father mark it, then, or else  
Farewell your hopes for ever of the purple

DOMINGO (*starts*).

How !

CARLOS.

Even so ! Hath he not promised you  
The earliest purple in the gift of Spain ?

DOMINGO.

You mock me, Prince !

CARLOS.

Nay ! Heaven forefend, that I  
Should mock that awful man, whose fateful lips  
Can doom my father or to heaven or hell !

DOMINGO.

I dare not, Prince, presume to penetrate  
The sacred mystery of your secret grief,  
Yet I implore your Highness to remember,  
That, for a conscience ill at ease, the Church  
Hath opened an asylum, of which kings  
Hold not the key—where even crimes are purged  
Beneath the holy Sacramental seal.  
You know my meaning, Prince—I've said enough.

CARLOS.

No ! be it never said, I tempted so  
The keeper of that seal.

DOMINGO.

Prince, this mistrust—  
You wrong the most devoted of your servants.

CARLOS.

Then give me up at once without a thought !  
Thou art a holy man,—the world knows that,—  
But, to speak plain, too zealous far for me.  
The road to Peter's chair is long and rough,  
And too much knowledge might encumber you.  
Go, tell this to the King, who sent thee hither !

DOMINGO.

Who sent me hither ?

CARLOS.

Ay ! Those were my words.  
Too well—too well, I know, that I'm betray'd,  
Slander'd on every hand—that at this court  
A hundred eyes are hired to watch my steps.



I know, that royal Philip to his slaves  
Hath sold his only son, and ev'ry wretch,  
Who takes account of each half-utter'd word,  
Receives such princely guerdon, as was ne'er  
Bestowed on deeds of honour. O, I know——  
But hush!—no more of that! My heart will else  
O'erflow, and I've already said too much.

DOMINGO.

The King is minded, ere the set of sun,  
To reach Madrid: I see the Court is mustering.  
Have I permission, Prince?

CARLOS.

I'll follow straight.

[*Exit DOMINGO.*]

CARLOS (*after a short silence*).

O, wretched Philip! wretched as thy son!  
Soon shall thy bosom bleed at ev'ry pore,  
Torn by suspicion's poisonous serpent fang.  
Thy fell sagacity full soon shall pierce  
The fatal secret it is bent to know,  
And thou wilt madden, when it breaks upon thee!

SCENE II.

CARLOS, MARQUIS OF POSA.

CARLOS.

Lo! Who comes here? 'Tis he! O, ye kind heavens,  
My Roderigo!

MARQUIS

Carlos!

CARLOS.

Can it be?

And is it truly thou? O yes, it is!  
I press thee to my bosom, and I feel  
Thy throbbing heart beat wildly 'gainst mine own  
And now all's well again. In this embrace  
My sick, sad heart is comforted. I hang  
Upon my Roderigo's neck!

MARQUIS.

Thy heart!

Thy sick, sad heart! And what is well again—  
What needeth to be well? Thy words anaze me.

CARLOS.

What brings thee back so suddenly from Brussels?  
 Whom must I thank for this most glad surprise?  
 And dare I ask? Whom should I thank but thee,  
 Thou gracious and all bounteous Providence?  
 Forgive me, Heaven! if joy hath crazed my brain.  
 Thou knew'st, no angel watch'd at Carlos' side,  
 And sent me thus! And yet I ask who sent him?

MARQUIS.

Pardon, dear Prince, if I can only meet  
 With wonder these tumultuous ecstasies.  
 Not thus I look'd to find Don Philip's son.  
 A hectic red burns on your pallid cheek,  
 And your lips quiver with a feverish heat.  
 What must I think, dear Prince? No more I see  
 The youth of lion heart, to whom I come  
 The envoy of a brave and suffering people.  
 For now I stand not here as Rodrigo,—  
 Not as the playmate of the stripling Carlos,—  
 But, as the deputy of all mankind,  
 I clasp thee thus:—'tis Flanders that clings here  
 Around thy neck, appealing with my tears  
 To thee for succour in her bitter need.  
 'This land is lost, this land so dear to thee,  
 If Alva, bigotry's relentless tool,  
 Advance on Brussels with his Spanish laws.  
 This noble country's last faint hope depend:  
 On thee, lov'd scion of Imperial Charles!  
 And, should thy noble heart forget to beat,  
 In human nature's cause, Flanders is lost!

CARLOS.

Then it is lost!

MARQUIS.

What do I hear? Alas!

CARLOS.

Thou speak'st of times, that long have pass'd away.  
 I, too, have had my visions of a Carlos,  
 Whose cheek would fire at freedom's glorious name.  
 But he, alas! has long been in his grave.

He, thou seest here, no longer is that Carlos,  
Who took his leave of thee in Alcala,  
Who, in the fervour of a youthful heart,  
Resolv'd. at some no distant time, to wake  
The golden age in Spain! O the conceit,  
Though but a child's, was yet divinely fair!  
Those dreams are past!

MARQUIS

Said you, those dreams, my Prince!  
And were they only dreams?

CARLOS.

O let me weep,  
Upon thy bosom weep these burning tears,  
My only friend! Not one have I—not one—  
In the wide circuit of this earth,—not one  
Far as the sceptre of my sire extends,  
Far as his navies bear the flag of Spain,  
There is no spot—none—none, where I dare yield  
An outlet to my tears, save only this.  
I charge thee, Roderigo! O, by all  
The hopes we both do entertain of heaven,  
Cast me not off from thee, my friend, my friend.

*POSA bends over him in silent emotion.*

Look on me, Posa, as an orphan child,  
Found near the throne, and nurtured by thy love.  
Indeed, I know not what a father is.  
I am a monarch's son.—O, were it so,  
As my heart tells me that it surely is,  
That thou from millions hast been chosen out  
To comprehend my being; if it be true,  
That all-creating nature has designed  
In me to reproduce a Roderigo,  
And on the morning of our life attuned  
Our souls' soft concords to the selfsame key;  
If one poor tear, which gives my heart relief,  
To thee were dearer than my father's favour—

MARQUIS.

O, it is dearer far than all the world!

CARLOS.

I'm fallen so low, have grown so poor withal,  
I must recall to thee our childhood's years,—

Must ask thee payment of a debt incurr'd  
When thou and I were scarce to boyhood grown.  
Dost thou remember, how we grew together,  
Two daring youths, like brothers, side by side?  
I had no sorrow but to see myself  
Eclipsed by thy bright genius. So I vow'd,  
Since I might never cope with thee in power,  
That I would love thee with excess of love.  
Then with a thousand shows of tenderness,  
And warm affection, I besieged thy heart,  
Which cold and proudly still repulsed them all.  
Oft have I stood, and—yet thou saw'st it never—  
Hot bitter tear-drops brimming in mine eyes,  
When I have mark'd thee, passing me unheeded,  
Fold to thy bosom youths of humbler birth.  
“Why only these?” in anguish once I asked—  
“Am I not kind and good to thee as they?”  
But dropping on thy knees, thine answer came,  
With an unloving look of cold reserve,  
“This is my duty to the monarch's son!”

MARQUIS.

O spare me, dearest Prince, nor now recall  
Those boyish acts that make me blush for shame

I did not merit such disdain from thee—  
You might despise me, crush my heart, but never  
Alter my love. Three times didst thou repulse  
The Prince, and thrice he came to thee again,  
To beg thy love, and force on thee his own.  
At length chance wrought what Carlos never could.  
Once we were playing, when thy shuttlecock  
Glanced off and struck my aunt, Bohemia's Queen,  
Full in the face! She thought 'twas with intent,  
And all in tears complain'd unto the King.  
The palace youth were summon'd on the spot,  
And charged to name the culprit.—High in wrath,  
The King vow'd vengeance for the deed: “Although  
It were his son, yet still should he be made  
A dread example!” I look'd around, and mark'd

Thee stand aloof, all trembling with dismay.  
Straight I stepp'd forth ; before the royal feet  
I flung myself, and cried—" 'Twas I who did it,  
Now let thine anger fall upon thy son ! "

MARQUIS.

Ah ! wherefore, Prince, remind me ?

CARLOS.

Hear me farther !

Before the face of the assembled Court,  
That stood, all pale with pity, round about,  
Thy Carlos was tied up, whipt like a slave—  
I look'd on thee and wept not. Blow rain'd on blow ;  
I gnash'd my teeth with pain, yet wept I not !  
My royal blood stream'd 'neath the pitiless lash ;  
I look'd on thee, and wept not. Then you came,  
And fell half choked with sobs before my feet :  
" Carlos," you cried, " my pride is overcome ;  
I will repay thee when thou art a king."

MARQUIS (*stretching forth his hand to CARLOS*).

Carlos, I'll keep my word : my boyhood's vow  
I now as man renew. I will repay thee.  
Some day, perchance, the hour may come——

CARLOS.

Now ! now !

The hour has come ; thou canst repay me all.  
I have sore need of love. A fearful secret  
Burns in my breast ; it must—it must be told.  
In thy pale looks my death- doom will I read.  
Listen—be petrified—but answer not.  
I love—I love——my mother !

MARQUIS.

O my God

CARLOS.

Nay, no forbearance ! Spare me not ! Speak ! speak—  
Proclaim aloud, that on this earth's great round  
There is no misery to compare with mine.  
Speak, speak !—I know all—all that thou canst say !  
The son doth love his mother. All the world's  
Fix'd usages,—the course of nature,—Rome's

Fearful laws, denounce my fatal passion.  
 My suit conflicts with my own father's rights :  
 I feel it all, and yet I love. This path  
 Leads on to madness, or the scaffold. I  
 Love without hope—love guiltily—love madly,  
 With anguish, and with peril of my life ;  
 I see, I see it all, and yet I love.

MARQUIS.

The Queen,—does she know of your passion ?

CARLOS.

Could I

Reveal it to her ? She is Philip's wife,—  
 She is the Queen, and this is Spanish ground,  
 Watch'd by a jealous father, hemm'd around  
 By ceremonial forms, how, how could I  
 Approach her unobserved ? 'Tis now eight months,  
 Eight maddening months, since the King summon'd me  
 Home from my studies,—since I have been doom'd  
 To look on her,—adore her, day by day,  
 And all the while be silent as the grave !  
 Eight maddening months, Roderigo,—think of this !—  
 This fire has seethed and rag'd within my breast !  
 A thousand, thousand times, the dread confession  
 Has mounted to my lips, — yet evermore  
 Shrunk, like a craven, back upon my heart.  
 O Roderigo !—for a few brief moments  
*Alone* with her !

MARQUIS.

Ah ! and your father, Prince !

CARLOS.

Unhappy mo ! Remind me not of him.  
 Tell me of all the torturing pangs of conscience,  
 But speak not, I implore you, of my father !

MARQUIS.

Then do you hate your father ?

CARLOS.

No, oh no !

I do not hate my father ; but the fear  
That guilty creatures feel,—a shuddering dread,—  
Comes o'er me ever at that terrible name  
Am I to blame, if slavish nurture crush'd  
Love's tender germ within my youthful heart?  
Six years I'd numbered, ere the fearful man,  
They told me was my father, met mine eyes.  
One morning 'twas, when with a stroke I saw him  
Sign four death warrants After that I ne'er  
Beheld him, save when, for some childish fault,  
I was brought out for chastisement. O God!  
I feel my heart grow bitter at the thought.  
Let us away! away!

MARQUIS.

Nay, Carlos, nay,  
You must, you shall give all your sorrow vent  
Let it have words! 'twill ease your o'erfraught heart.

CARLOS.

Oft have I struggled with myself, and oft  
At midnight, when my guards were sunk in sleep,  
With floods of burning tears I've sunk before  
The image of the ever-blessed Virgin,  
And craved a filial heart, but all in vain.  
I rose with prayer unheard. O Roderigo!  
Unfold this wondrous mystery of Heaven,  
Why of a thousand fathers only this  
Should fall to me—and why to him this son,  
Of many thousand better? Nature could not  
In her wide orb have found two opposites  
More diverse in their elements How could  
She bind the two extremes of human kind—  
Myself and him—in one so holy bond?  
O dreadful fate! Why was it so decreed?  
Why should two men, in all things else apart,  
Concur so fearfully in one desire?  
Roderigo, here thou seest two hostile stars,  
That in the lapse of ages, only once,  
As they sweep onwards in their orb'd course,  
Touch with a crash that shakes them to the centre,  
Then rush apart for ever and for ever

MARQUIS.

I feel a dire foreboding.

CARLOS.

So do I.

Like hell's grim furies, dreams of dreadful shape  
Pursue me nightly. My better genius strives  
With the fell projects of a dark despair.  
My wildered subtle spirit crawls through maze  
On maze of sophistries, until at length  
It gains a yawning precipice's brink.  
O, Roderigo! should I e'er in him  
Forget the father—ah! thy deathlike look  
Tells me I'm understood—should I forget  
The father—what were then the King to me?

MARQUIS (*after a pause*).

One thing, my Carlos, let me beg of you!  
Whate'er may be your plans, do nothing,—nothing,—  
Without your friend's advice. You promise this?

CARLOS.

All, all I promise that thy love can ask!  
I throw myself entirely upon thee!

MARQUIS.

The King, I hear, is going to Madrid.  
The time is short. If with the Queen you would  
Converse in private, it is only here,  
Here in Aranjuez, it can be done.  
The quiet of the place, the freer manners,  
All favour you.

CARLOS.

And such, too, was my hope;  
But it, alas, was vain.

MARQUIS.

Not wholly so.

I go to wait upon her. If she be  
The same in Spain she was in Henry's Court,  
She will be frank at least. And if I can  
Read any hope for Carlos in her looks—  
Find her inclined to grant an interview—  
Get her attendant ladies sent away—



CARLOS.

Most of them are my friends—especially  
The Countess Mondecar, whom I have gain'd  
By service to her son, my page.

MARQUIS.

'Tis well ;  
Be you at hand, and ready to appear,  
When'er I give the signal, Prince.

CARLOS.

I will,—  
Be sure, I will:—and all good speed attend thee !

MARQUIS.

I will not lose a moment ; so, farewell.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

## SCENE III.

*The Queen's Residence in Aranjuez.—The Pleasure Grounds,  
intersected by an Avenue, terminated by the Queen's Palace.*

THE QUEEN, DUCHESS OF OLIVAREZ, PRINCESS OF EBOLI. and  
MARCHIONESS OF MONDECAR, all advancing from the avenue.

QUEEN (*to the Marchioness*).

I will have you beside me, Mondecar.  
The Princess, with these merry eyes of hers,  
Has plagued me all the morning. See, she scarce  
Can hide the joy she feels to leave the country.

EBOLI.

'Twere idle to conceal, my Queen, that I  
Shall be most glad to see Madrid once more.

MONDECAR.

And will your Majesty not be so, too ?  
Are you so griev'd to quit Aranjuez ?

QUEEN.

To quit—this lovely spot at least. I am.  
This is my world. Its sweetness oft and oft  
Has twined itself around my inmost heart.  
Here, nature, simple, rustic nature greets me,  
The sweet companion of my early years—  
Here I indulge once more my childhood's sports,

And my dear France's gales come blowing here.  
Blame not this partial fondness—all hearts yearn  
For their own native land.

EBOLI.

But then how lone,  
How dull and lifeless is it here! We might  
As well be in La Trappe.

QUEEN.

I cannot see it.  
To me Madrid alone is lifeless. But  
What saith our Duchess to it?

OLIVAREZ.

Why, methinks,  
Your Majesty, since kings have ruled in Spain,  
It hath been still the custom for the Court  
To pass the summer months alternately  
Here and at Pardo,—in Madrid, the winter.

QUEEN.

Well, I suppose it has! Duchess, you know  
I've long resign'd all argument with you.

MONDECAR.

Next month, Madrid will be all life and bustle.  
They're fitting up the Plaza Mayor now,  
And we shall have rare bull-fights; and, besides,  
A grand Auto da Fé is promised us.

QUEEN.

Promised? This from my gentle Mondecar!

MONDECAR.

Why not? 'Tis only heretics they burn!

QUEEN.

I hope my Eboli thinks otherwise!

EBOLI.

What, I? I beg your Majesty may think me  
As good a Christian as the Marchioness.

QUEEN.

Alas! I had forgotten where I am,—  
No more of this! We were speaking, I think,  
About the country? And methinks this month

Has flown away with strange rapidity.  
 I counted on much pleasure, very much,  
 From our retirement here, and yet I have not  
 Found that which I expected. Is it thus  
 With all our hopes? And yet I cannot say  
 One wish of mine is left ungratified.

OLIVAREZ.

You have not told us, Princess Eboli,  
 If there be hope for Gomez,—and if we may  
 Expect ere long to greet you as his bride?

QUEEN.

True—thank you, Duchess, for reminding me!  
[Addressing the PRINCESS.]

I have been ask'd to urge his suit with you.  
 But can I do it? The man, whom I reward  
 With my sweet Eboli, must be a man  
 Of noble stamp indeed.

OLIVAREZ.

And such he is,  
 A man of mark and fairest fame,—a man  
 Whom our dear monarch signally has graced  
 With his most royal favour.

QUEEN.

He's happy in  
 Such high good fortune; but we fain would know,  
 If he can love, and win return of love.  
 This Eboli must answer.

EBOLI (*stands speechless and confused, her eyes bent on the  
 ground; at last she falls at the QUEEN'S feet*).

Gracious Queen!

Have pity on me! Let me—let me not,—  
 For Heaven's sake, let me not be sacrificed.

QUEEN

Be sacrificed! I need no more. Arise!  
 'Tis a hard fortune to be sacrificed  
 I do believe you. Rise. And is it long  
 Since you rejected Gomez' suit?

EBOLI.

Some months—  
 Before Prince Carlos came from Alcala.

QUEEN (*starts and looks at her with an inquisitive glance*).  
Have you tried well the grounds of your refusal?

EBOLI (*with energy*).  
It cannot be, my Queen, no, never, never,—  
For a thousand reasons, never!

QUEEN.  
One s enough.  
You do not love him. That suffices me.  
Now let it pass. *[To her other ladies.]*  
I have not seen the Infanta  
Yet this morning. Pray bring her, Marchioness.

OLIVAREZ (*looking at the clock*).  
It is not yet the hour, your Majesty.

QUEEN.  
Not yet the hour for me to be a mother!  
That's somewhat hard. Forget not, then, to tell me  
When the right hour does come.

*[A Page enters and whispers to the first lady, who there-  
upon turns to the QUEEN.]*

OLIVAREZ.  
The Marquis Posa,  
May 't please your Majesty.

QUEEN.  
The Marquis Posa!

OLIVAREZ.  
He comes from France, and from the Netherlands,  
And craves the honour to present some letters  
Entrusted to him by your royal Mother.

QUEEN.  
Is this allow'd?

OLIVAREZ (*hesitating*).  
A case so unforeseen  
Is not provided for in my instructions.  
When a Castilian grandee, with despatches  
From foreign Courts, shall in her garden find  
The Queen of Spain, and tender them—

QUEEN.  
Enough!  
I'll venture, then, on mine own proper peril.

OLIVAREZ.

May I, your Majesty, withdraw the while?

QUEEN.

E'en as you please, good Duchess!

*[Exit the DUCHESS, the QUEEN gives the Page a sign, who thereupon retires.]*

## SCENE IV.

*The QUEEN, PRINCESS EBOLI, MARCHIONESS OF MONDECAR,  
and MARQUIS OF POSA.*

QUEEN.

I bid you welcome, sir, to Spanish ground!

MARQUIS.

Ground, which I never with so just a pride  
Hail'd for the country of my sires, as now.

QUEEN *(to the two ladies)*.

The Marquis Posa, ladies, who at Rheims  
Coped with my father in the lists, and made  
My colours thrice victorious; the first,  
That made me feel how proud a thing it was  
To be the Queen of Spain and Spanish men.

*[Turning to the MARQUIS.]*

When we last parted in the Louvre, sir,  
You scarcely dream'd that I should ever be  
Your hostess in Castile.

MARQUIS

Most true, my liege!

For at that time I never could have dream'd  
That France should lose to us the only thing  
We envied her possessing.

QUEEN.

How, proud Spaniard!

The only thing! And you can venture this—  
This, to a daughter of the House of Valois!

MARQUIS.

I venture now to say it, gracious Queen,  
Since now you are our own.

QUEEN

Your journey hither  
Has led you, as I hear, thro' France What news

Have you brought with you from my honour'd mother,  
And from my dearest brothers?

MARQUIS (*handing letters*).

I left your Royal Mother sick at heart,  
Bereft of every joy, save only this,  
To know her daughter happy on the throne  
Of our imperial Spain.

QUEEN.

Could she be aught  
But happy, in the dear remembrances  
Of relatives so kind—in the sweet thoughts  
Of the old time, when——Sir, you've visited  
Full many a court in these your various travels,  
And seen strange lands and customs manifold;  
And now, they say, you mean to keep at home,  
A greater prince, in your retired domain,  
Than is King Philip on his throne—a freer.  
You're a philosopher: but much I doubt  
If our Madrid will please you. We are so—  
So quiet in Madrid.

MARQUIS.

And that is more  
Than all the rest of Europe has to boast.

QUEEN.

I've heard as much. But all this world's concerns  
Are well nigh blotted from my memory.

[To PRINCESS EBOLI.

Princess, methinks I see a hyacinth  
Yonder, in bloom. Wilt bring it to me, sweet?

[*The PRINCESS goes towards the place, the QUEEN softly  
to the MARQUIS.*

I'm much mistaken, sir, or your arrival  
Has made one heart more happy here at court.

MARQUIS.

I have found a sad one—one that in this world  
A ray of sunshine——

EBOLI.

As this gentleman  
Has seen so many countries, he, no doubt,  
Has much of note to tell us.

MARQUIS.

Doubtless, and  
To seek adventures, is a knight's first duty—  
But his most sacred is to shield the fair.

MONDECAR.

From giants ! But there are no giants now!

MARQUIS.

Power is a giant ever to the weak

QUEEN.

The chevalier says well. There still are giants,  
But there are knights no more.

MARQUIS.

Not long ago,  
On my return from Naples, I became  
The witness of a very touching story,  
Which ties of friendship almost make my own.  
Were I not fearful its recital might  
Fatigue your Majesty——

QUEEN.

Have I a choice?  
The Princess is not to be lightly balked.  
Proceed. I too, sir, love a story dearly.

MARQUIS.

Two noble houses in Mirandola,  
Wearied of jealousies and deadly feuds,  
Transmitted down from Guelphs and Ghibellines,  
Through centuries of hate, from sire to son,  
Resolved to ratify a lasting peace  
By the sweet ministry of nuptial ties.  
Fernando, nephew of the great Pietro,  
And fair Matilda, old Colonna's child,  
Were chosen to cement this holy bond.  
Nature had never for each other form'd  
Two fairer hearts. And never had the world  
Approved a wiser or a happier choice.  
Still had the youth adored his lovely bride  
In the dull limner's portraiture alone.  
How thrill'd his heart, then, in the hope to find  
The truth of all that e'en his fondest dreams  
Had scarcely dared to credit in her picture !

In Padua, where his studies held him bound,  
 Fernando panted for the joyful hour,  
 When he might murmur at Matilda's feet  
 The first pure homage of his fervent love.

[*The QUEEN grows more attentive; the MARQUIS continues, after a short pause, addressing himself chiefly to PRINCESS EBOLI.*

Meanwhile the sudden death of Pietro's wife,  
 Had left him free to wed. With the hot glow  
 Of youthful blood the hoary lover drinks  
 The fame that reach'd him of Matilda's charms  
 He comes—he sees—he loves! The new desire  
 Stifles the voice of nature in his heart.  
 The uncle woos his nephew's destined bride,  
 And at the altar consecrates his theft.

QUEEN.

And what did then Fernando?

MARQUIS.

On the wings  
 Of love, unconscious of the fearful change,  
 Delirious with the promis'd joy, he speeds  
 Back to Mirandola. His flying steed  
 By star-light gains the gate. Tumultuous sounds  
 Of music, dance, and jocund revelry  
 Ring from the walls of the illumin'd palace.  
 With faltering steps he mounts the stair; and now  
 Behold him in the crowded nuptial hall,  
 Unrecognised! Amid the reeling guests  
 Pietro sat. An angel at his side—  
 An angel, whom he knows, and who to him,  
 Even in his dreams, seem'd ne'er so beautiful.  
 A single glance reveal'd what once was his,—  
 Reveal'd what now was lost to him for ever.

EBOLI.

O poor Fernando!

QUEEN.

Surely, sir, your tale  
 Is ended? Nay, it must be.

MARQUIS.

No, not quite.



QUEEN.

Did you not say, Fernando was your friend?

MARQUIS.

I have no dearer in the world.

EBOLI.

But pray

Proceed, sir, with your story.

MARQUIS.

Nay, the rest

Is very sad—and to recall it sets

My sorrow fresh abroad. Spare me the sequel.

[A general silence

QUEEN (turning to the PRINCESS EBOLI).

Surely the time is come to see my daughter,

I prithee, princess, bring her to me now!

[The PRINCESS withdraws. The MARQUIS beckons a Page.

The QUEEN opens the letters, and appears surprised

The MARQUIS talks with MARCHIONESS MONDECAR.

The QUEEN having read the letters, turns to the MARQUIS with a penetrating look.

QUEEN.

You have not spoken of Matilda!—She

Haply was ignorant of Fernando's grief?

MARQUIS.

Matilda's heart has no one fathom'd yet—

Great souls endure in silence.

QUEEN.

You look around you. Who is it you seek?

MARQUIS.

Just then the thought came over me, how one,

Whose name I dare not mention, would rejoice,

Stood he where I do now.

QUEEN.

And who's to blame,

That he does not?

MARQUIS (interrupting her eagerly).

My liege! And dare I venture

To interpret thee, as fain I would? He'd find

Forgiveness, then, if now he should appear.

QUEEN (*alarmed*).

Now, Marquis, now? What do you mean by this?

MARQUIS.

Might he, then, hope?

QUEEN.

You terrify me, Marquis.

Surely he will not——

MARQUIS.

He is here already.

SCENE V.

*The QUEEN, CARLOS, MARQUIS POSA, MARCHIONESS MONDECAR.*

*The two latter go towards the Avenue.*

CARLOS (*on his knees before the QUEEN*).

At length 'tis come—the happy moment's come,  
And Charles may touch this all-beloved hand.

QUEEN.

What headlong folly's this? And dare you break  
Into my presence thus? Arise, rash man!  
We are observed; my suite are close at hand.

CARLOS.

I will not rise. Here will I kneel for ever,  
Here will I lie enchanted at your feet,  
And grow to the dear ground you tread on?

QUEEN.

Madman!

To what rude boldness my indulgence leads!  
Know you, it is the Queen, your mother, sir,  
Whom you address in such presumptuous strain?  
Know, that myself will to the King, report  
This bold intrusion——

CARLOS.

And that I must die!

Let them come here, and drag me to the scaffold!  
A moment spent in paradise, like this,  
Is not too dearly purchased by a life.

QUEEN.

But then your Queen?——

CARLOS (*rising*).

O God, I'll go, I'll go!

Can I refuse to bend to that appeal?

I am your very plaything. Mother, mother,  
A sign, a transient glance, one broken word  
From those dear lips can bid me live or die.  
What would you more? Is there beneath the sun  
One thing I would not haste to sacrifice,  
To meet your lightest wish?

QUEEN.

Then fly!

CARLOS.

O God!

QUEEN.

With tears I do conjure you, Carlos, fly!  
I ask no more. O fly! before my court,  
My guards, detecting us alone together,  
Bear the dread tidings to your father's ear.

CARLOS.

I bide my doom, or be it life or death.  
Have I staked every hope on this one moment,  
Which gives thee to me, thus at length alone,  
That idle fears should balk me of my purpose?  
No, Queen! The world may round its axis roll  
A hundred thousand times, ere chance again  
Yield to my prayers a moment such as this.

QUEEN.

It never shall to all eternity.  
Unhappy man! What would you ask of me?

CARLOS.

Heaven is my witness. Queen, how I have struggled,  
Struggled as mortal never did before.  
But all in vain! My manhood fails—I yield.

QUEEN.

No more of this—for *my* sake—for my peace—

CARLOS.

You were mine own,—in face of all the world,—  
Affianced to me by two mighty crowns,  
By Heaven and nature plighted as my bride,  
But Philip, cruel Philip, stole you from me.

QUEEN.

He is your father!

CARLOS.

And he is your husband!

QUEEN.

And gives to you, for an inheritance,  
The mightiest monarchy in all the world!

CARLOS.

And you, as mother!

QUEEN.

Mighty Heavens! You rave!

CARLOS.

And is he even conscious of his treasure?  
Hath he a heart to feel and value yours?  
I'll not complain—no, no, I will forget,  
How happy, past all utterance, I might  
Have been with you,—if he were only so.  
But he is not—there, there the anguish lies!  
He is not, and he never—never can be.  
O, you have robb'd me of my paradise,  
Only to blast it in King Philip's arms!

QUEEN.

Horrible thought!

CARLOS.

O yes, right well I know  
Who 'twas that knit this ill-starr'd marriage up  
I know how Philip loves, and how he wooed.  
What are you in this kingdom—tell me, what?  
Regent, belike! Oh, no! If such you were,  
How could fell Alvas act their murderous deeds,  
Or Flanders bleed a martyr for her faith?  
Are you e'en Philip's wife? Impossible—  
Beyond belief. A wife doth still possess  
Her husband's heart. To whom doth his belong?  
If e'er, perchance, in some hot feverish mood,  
He yields to gentler impulse, begs he not  
Forgiveness of his sceptre and grey hairs?

QUEEN.

Who told you that my lot, at Philip's side,  
Was one for men to pity?

CARLOS.

My own heart!  
Which feels, with burning pangs, how at my side  
It had been to be envied.

QUEEN.

Thou vain man !

What if my heart should tell me the reverse?  
How, sir, if Philip's watchful tenderness,  
The looks that silently proclaim his love,  
Touch'd me more deeply, than his haughty son's  
Presumptuous eloquence? What, if an old man's  
Matured esteem——

CARLOS.

That makes a difference! Then,  
Why then, forgiveness!—I'd no thought of this;  
I had no thought that you could love the King.

QUEEN.

To honour him's my pleasure and my wish.

CARLOS.

Then you have never loved?

QUEEN.

Singular question!

CARLOS.

You have never loved?

QUEEN.

I love no longer!

CARLOS.

Because your heart forbids it, or your oath?

QUEEN.

Leave me; nor ever touch this theme again.

CARLOS.

Because your oath forbids it, or your heart?

QUEEN.

Because my duty—but, alas, alas!  
To what avails this scrutiny of fate,  
Which we must both obey?

CARLOS.

Must—must obey?

QUEEN.

What means this solemn tone?

CARLOS.

'Thus much it means:

That Carlos is not one to yield to *must*,  
Where he hath power to *will*! It means, besides,  
That Carlos is not minded to live on,

The most unhappy man in all this realm,  
When it would only cost the overthrow  
Of Spanish laws to be the happiest.

QUEEN.

Do I interpret rightly? Still you hope?  
Dare you hope on, where all is lost for ever?

CARLOS.

I look on nought as lost—except the dead.

QUEEN.

For me—your mother, do you dare to hope?

*[She fixes a penetrating look on him, then continues  
with dignity and earnestness.]*

And yet why not? A new elected monarch  
Can do far more—make bonfires of the laws  
His father left him—o'erthrow his monuments—  
Nay, more than this—for what shall hinder him"—  
Drag from his tomb, in the Escorial,  
The sacred corpse of his departed sire.  
Make it a public spectacle, and scatter  
Forth to the winds his desecrated dust.  
And then, at last, to fill the measure up,—

CARLOS.

Merciful Heavens, finish not the picture!

QUEEN.

End all by wedding with his mother.

CARLOS.

(Oh !

Accursed son!

*[He remains for some time paralysed and speechless.]*

Yes, now 'tis out, 'tis out!

I see it clear as day. O, would it had  
Been veil'd from me in everlasting darkness!  
Yes, thou art gone from me—gone—gone for ever  
The die is cast; and thou art lost to me.  
Oh in that thought lies hell; and a hell, too,  
Lies in the other thought, to call thee mine.  
Oh misery! I can bear my fate no longer,  
My very heart-strings strain as they would burst.

QUEEN.

Alas, alas! dear Charles, I feel it all,  
The nameless pang that rages in your breast;

Your pangs are infinite, as is your love,  
And infinite as both will be the glory  
Of overmastering both. Up, be a man,  
Wrestle with them boldly. The prize is worthy  
Of a young warrior's high, heroic heart ;  
Worthy of him in whom the virtues flow  
Of a long ancestry of mighty kings.  
Courage ! my noble Prince ! Great Charles's grandson  
Begins the contest with undaunted heart,  
Where sons of meaner men would yield at once

CARLOS.

Too late, too late ! O God, it is too late !

QUEEN.

Too late to be a man ! O Carlos, Carlos !  
How nobly shows our virtue, when the heart  
Breaks in its exercise ! The hand of Heaven  
Has set you up on high,—far higher, Prince,  
Than millions of your brethren. All she took  
From others, she bestow'd with partial hand  
On thee, her favourite ; and millions ask,  
What was your merit, thus before your birth  
To be endowed so far above mankind ?  
Up, then, and justify the ways of Heaven ;  
Deserve to take the lead of all the world,  
And make a sacrifice ne'er made before.

CARLOS.

I will, I will :—I have a giant's strength  
To win your favour ; but to lose you, none.

QUEEN.

Confess, my Carlos, I have harshly read thee ;  
It is but spleen, and waywardness, and pride,  
Attract you thus so madly to your mother !  
The heart you lavish on myself, belongs  
To the great empire you one day shall rule.  
Look, that you sport not with your sacred trust !  
Love is your high vocation ; until now  
It hath been wrongly bent upon your mother :  
Oh, lead it back upon your future realms,  
And so, instead of the fell stings of conscience,  
Enjoy the bliss of being more than man.

Elizabeth has been your earliest love,  
Your second must be Spain. How gladly, Carlos,  
Will I give place to this more worthy choice!

CARLOS (*overpowered by emotion, throws himself at her feet*).  
How great thou art, my angel! Yes, I'll do  
All, all thou canst desire. So let it be.

[*He rises.*]

Here, in the sight of heaven I stand, and swear—  
I swear to thee, eternal—no, great Heaven!—  
Eternal silence only,—not oblivion.

QUEEN.

How can I ask from you, what I myself  
Am not disposed to grant?

MARQUIS (*hastening from the alley*).  
The King!

QUEEN.

Oh God!

MARQUIS.

Away, away! out of these precincts, Prince.

QUEEN.

His jealousy is dreadful—should he see you—

CARLOS.

I'll stay.

QUEEN.

And who will be the victim, then?

CARLOS (*seizing the MARQUIS by the arm*).

Away, away! Come, Roderigo, come!

[*Goes and returns.*]

What may I hope to carry hence with me?

QUEEN.

Your mother's friendship.

CARLOS.

Friendship! Mother!

QUEEN.

And

These tears with it—they're from the Netherlands.

[*She gives him some letters.—Exit CARLOS with the MARQUIS. The QUEEN looks restlessly round in search of her ladies, who are nowhere to be seen. As she is about to retire up, the KING enters.*]



## SCENE VI.

*The KING, the QUEEN, DUKE ALVA, COUNT LERMA, DOMINGO,  
LADIES, GRANDEES, who remain at a little distance.*

KING.

How, Madam, alone?—not even one of all  
Your ladies in attendance? Strange! Where are they?

QUEEN.

My gracious lord!

KING

Why thus alone, I say?

*[To his Attendants.]*

I'll take a strict account of this neglect.  
'Tis not to be forgiven. Who has the charge  
Of waiting on your Majesty to-day?

QUEEN.

O be not angry! Good, my Lord, 'tis I  
Myself that am to blame—at my request  
The Princess Eboli went hence but now.

KING.

At your request!

QUEEN.

To call the nurse to me,  
With the Infanta, whom I long'd to see.

KING.

And was your retinue dismiss'd for that?  
This only clears the lady first in waiting.  
Where was the second?

MONDECAR *(who has returned and mixed with the  
other ladies, steps forward).*

Your Majesty, I feel

I am to blame for this.

KING.

You are, and so

I give you ten years to reflect upon it,  
At a most tranquil distance from Madrid.

*[The Marchioness steps back weeping. General silence.  
The bystanders all look in confusion towards the QUEEN.]*

QUEEN.

What weep you for, dear Marchioness?

[To the KING.

If I

Have err'd, my gracious Liege, the crown I wear,  
 And which I never sought, should save my blushes.  
 Is there a law in this your kingdom, Sire,  
 To summon monarchs' daughters to the bar?  
 Does force alone restrain your Spanish ladies?  
 Or need they stronger safeguard than their virtue?  
 Now pardon me, my Liege: 'tis not my wont  
 To send my ladies, who have served me still  
 With smiling cheerfulness, away in tears.  
 Here, Mondecar.

[She takes off her girdle and presents it to the MARCHIONESS.

You have displeased the King,  
 Not me. Take this remembrance of my favour,  
 And of this hour. I'd have you quit the kingdom.  
 You've only err'd in Spain. In my dear France,  
 All men are glad to wipe such tears away.  
 And must I ever be reminded thus?  
 In my dear France it had been otherwise.

[Leaning on the MARCHIONESS and covering her face

KING.

Can a reproach, that in my love had birth,  
 Afflict you so? A word so trouble you,  
 Which the most anxious tenderness did prompt?

[He turns towards the Grandees.

Here stand the assembled vassals of my throne.  
 Did ever sleep descend upon these eyes,  
 Till at the close of the returning day  
 I've pondered, how the hearts of all my subjects  
 Were beating 'neath the furthest cope of Heaven?  
 And should I feel more anxious for my throne,  
 Than for the partner of my bosom? No!  
 My sword and Alva can protect my people,  
 My eye alone assures thy love.

QUEEN.

My Liege,

If that I have offended—

KING.

I am call'd

The richest monarch in the Christian world ;  
The sun in my dominions never sets.  
All this another hath possess'd before,  
And many another will possess hereafter.  
That is mine own. All that the monarch hath  
Belongs to chance—Elizabeth to Philip.  
This is the point in which I feel I'm mortal.

QUEEN.

What fear you, Sire ?

KING.

Should these grey hairs not fear ?  
But the same instant that my fear begins,  
It dies away for ever. *[To the Grandees.]*

I run o'er

The nobles of my Court, and miss the foremost.  
Where is my son, Don Carlos ? *[No one answers.]*

He begins

To give me cause of fear. He shuns my presence,  
Since he came back from school at Alcala.  
His blood is hot. Why is his look so cold ?  
His bearing all so stately and reserved ?  
Be watchful, Duke, I charge you.

ALVA

So I am :

Long as a heart against this corslet beats,  
So long may Philip slumber undisturb'd ;  
And as God's Cherub guards the gates of heaven,  
So doth Duke Alva guard your royal throne.

LERMA.

Dare I, in all humility, presume  
To oppose the judgment of earth's wisest King ?  
Too deeply I revere his gracious sire,  
To judge the son so harshly. I fear much  
From his hot blood, but nothing from his heart.

KING.

Lerma, your speech is fair, to soothe the father,  
But Alva here will be the monarch's shield—  
No more of this.

[Turning to his Suite

Now speed we to Madrid,

Our royal duties summon us. The plague  
Of heresy is rife among my people ;  
Rebellion stalks within my Netherlands—  
The times are imminent. We must arrest  
These erring spirits by some dread example.  
The solemn oath which every Christian King  
Hath sworn to keep, I will redeem to-morrow.  
'Twill be a day of doom unparallel'd.  
Our Court is bidden to the festival.

[He leads off the QUEEN, the rest follow.]

### SCENE VII.

DON CARLOS (*with letters in his hand*), and MARQUIS POSA,  
*enter from opposite sides.*

CARLOS.

I am resolved—Flanders shall yet be saved :  
So runs her suit—and that's enough for me !

MARQUIS.

There's not another moment to be lost :  
'Tis said Duke Alva, in the Cabinet,  
Is named already as the Governor.

CARLOS.

Betimes, to-morrow, will I seek the King,  
And ask this office for myself. It is  
The first request I ever made to him,  
And he can scarce refuse me. My presence here  
Has long been irksome to him. He will grasp  
This fair pretence my absence to secure.  
Shall I confess to thee, Roderigo ?—  
My hopes go further. Face to face with him,  
'Tis possible, the pleading of a son  
May reinstate him in his father's favour.  
He ne'er hath heard the voice of nature speak ;  
Then let me try for once, my Roderigo,  
What power she hath when breathing from my lips.

MARQUIS.

Now do I hear my Carlos' voice once more :  
Now are you all yourself aguin !

## SCENE VIII.

*The preceding.* COUNT LERMA.

COUNT.

Your Grace,

His Majesty has left Aranjuez ;

And I am bidden — —

CARLOS.

Very well, my lord —

I shall o'ertake the King —

MARQUIS (*affecting to take leave with ceremony*).

Your Highness, then,

Has nothing further to intrust to me ?

CARLOS.

Nothing. A pleasant journey to Madrid !

You may, hereafter, tell me more of Flanders.'

[*To LERMA, who is waiting for him*

Proceed, my lord ! I'll follow thee anon.

## SCENE IX.

DON CARLOS, MARQUIS POSA.

CARLOS.

I understood thy hint, and thank thee for it.

A stranger's presence can alone excuse

This forced and measured tone. Are we not brothers ?

In future, let this puppet-play of rank

Be banish'd from our friendship. Think that we

Had met at some gay masking festival,

Thou in the habit of a slave, and I

Robed, for a jest, in the imperial purple.

Throughout the revel we respect the cheat,

And play our parts with sportive earnestness,

'Tripping it gaily with the merry throng ;

But should thy Carlos beckon through his mask,

Thou'dst press his hand in silence as he pass'd,

And we should be as one.

MARQUIS.

The dream's divine !

But are you sure, that it will last for ever ?

Is Carlos, then, so certain of himself,

As to despise the charms of boundless sway ?

A day will come — an all-important day —

When this heroic mind—I warn you now—  
Will sink o'erwhelm'd by too severe a test.  
Don Philip dies; and Carlos mounts the throne,  
The mightiest throne in Christendom. How vast  
The gulph that yawns betwixt mankind and him,  
A god to-day, who yesterday was man!  
Steel'd to all human weakness—to the voice  
Of heavenly duty deaf. Humanity,—  
To-day a word of import in his ear,—  
Barters itself, and grovels 'mid the throng  
Of gaping parasites;—his sympathy  
For human woe is turn'd to cold neglect,  
His virtue sunk in loose voluptuous joys.  
Peru supplies him riches for his folly,  
His court engenders devils for his vices.  
Lull'd in this heaven, the work of crafty slaves,  
He sleeps a charmed sleep; and while his dream  
Endures, his godhead lasts. And woe to him,  
Who'd break, in pity, this lethargic trance!  
What could Roderigo do? Friendship is true,  
And bold as true. But her bright flashing beams  
Were much too fierce for sickly majesty:  
You would not brook a subject's stern appeal,  
Nor I, a monarch's pride!

CARLOS.

Fearful and true,  
Thy portraiture of monarchs. Yes—thou'rt right.  
But 'tis their lusts that thus corrupt their hearts,  
And hurry them to vice. I still am pure.  
A youth scarce numbering three-and-twenty years.  
What thousands waste in riotous delights,  
Without remorse—the mind's more precious part—  
The bloom and strength of manhood—I have kept,  
Hoarding their treasures for the future king.  
What could unseat my Posa from my heart,  
If women fail to do it?

MARQUIS.

I, myself!

Say, could I love you, Carlos, warm as now,  
If I must fear you?

CARLOS.

That will never be.  
What need hast thou of me? What cause hast thou  
To stoop thy knee, a suppliant at the throne?  
Does gold allure thee? Thou'rt a richer subject,  
Than I shall be a king! Dost covet honours?  
E'en in thy youth, fame's brimming chalice stood  
Full in thy grasp—thou flung'st the toy away.  
Which of us, then, must be the other's debtor,  
And which the creditor? Thou standest mute.  
Dost tremble for the trial? Art thou, then,  
Uncertain of thyself?

MARQUIS.

Carlos, I yield!

Here is my hand.

CARLOS.

Is it mine own?

MARQUIS.

For ever—

In the most pregnant meaning of the word!

CARLOS.

And wilt thou prove hereafter to the King,  
As true and warm as to the Prince to-day?

MARQUIS.

I swear!

CARLOS.

And when round my unguarded heart  
The serpent flattery winds its subtle coil,  
Should e'er these eyes of mine forget the tears  
They once were wont to shed; or should these ears  
Be closed to mercy's plea,—say, wilt thou, then,  
The fearless guardian of my virtue, throw  
Thine iron grasp upon me, and call up  
My genius by its mighty name?

MARQUIS.

I will.

CARLOS.

And now one other favour let me beg.  
Do call me *thou*! Long have I envied this  
Dear privilege of friendship to thine equals.  
The brother's *thou* beguiles my ear, my heart,

With sweet suggestions of equality.  
 Nay, no reply:—I guess what thou wouldst say—  
 To thee this seems a trifle—but to me,  
 A monarch's son, 'tis much. Say, wilt thou be  
 A brother to me?

MARQUIS.

Yes; thy brother, yes!

CARLOS.

Now to the King—my fears are at an end:  
 Thus, arm in arm with thee, I dare defy  
 The universal world into the lists.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

*The Royal Palace at Madrid.*

KING PHILIP *under a canopy*; DUKE ALVA, *at some distance, with his head covered*; CARLOS.

CARLOS.

The kingdom takes precedence—willingly  
 Doth Carlos to the Minister give place—  
 He speaks for Spain; 'I am but of the household.

[*Bows and steps backward*

KING.

The Duke remains—the Infanta may proceed.

CARLOS (*turning to ALVA*)

Then must I put it to your honour, sir,  
 To yield my father for a while to me.  
 A son, you know, may to a father's ear  
 Unbosom much, in fulness of his heart,  
 That not befits a stranger's ear. The King  
 Shall not be taken from you, sir—I seek  
 The father only for one little hour.

KING.

Here stands his friend.

CARLOS.

And have I e'er deserved  
 To think the Duke should be a friend of mine?

KING.

Or tried to make him one? I scarce can love  
 Those sons who choose more wisely than their fathers.



CARLOS.

And can Duke Alva's knightly spirit brook  
To look on such a scene? Now, as I live,  
I would not play the busy meddler's part,  
Who thrusts himself, unask'd, 'twixt sire and son,  
And there intrudes without a blush, condemn'd  
By his own conscious insignificance,  
No, not, by Heaven, to win a diadem!

KING (*rising, with an angry look at the Prince*).  
Retire, my lord!

[ALVA goes to the principal door, through which CARLOS  
had entered, the KING points to the other.

No, to the Cabinet,

Until I call you.

## SCENE II.

KING PHILIP. DON CARLOS.

CARLOS (*as soon as the DUKE has left the Apartment, advances  
to the KING, throws himself at his feet, and then, with great  
emotion*)

My father once again!  
Thanks, endless thanks, for this unwonted favour!  
Your hand, my father! O delightful day!  
The rapture of this kiss has long been strange  
To your poor Carlos. Wherefore have I been  
Shut from my father's heart? What have I done?

KING.

Carlos, thou art a novice in these arts—  
Forbear, I like them not——

CARLOS (*rising*).

And is it so!

I hear your courtiers in those words, my father!  
All is not well, by Heaven, all is not true,  
That a priest says, and a priest's creatures plot.  
I am not wicked, father; ardent blood  
Is all my failing;—all my crime is youth;—  
Wicked I am not—no, in truth, not wicked;—  
Tho' many an impulse wild assails my heart,  
Yet is it still untainted.

KING.

Ay, 'tis pure—

I know it—like thy prayers——

CARLOS.

Now, then, or never!—

We are, for once, alone—the barrier  
 Of courtly form, that sever'd sire and son,  
 Has fallen! Now a golden ray of hope  
 Illumes my soul—a sweet presentiment  
 Pervades my heart—and heaven itself inclines  
 With choirs of joyous angels, to the earth,  
 And full of soft emotion, the thrice blest  
 Looks down upon this great, this glorious scene!—  
 Pardon, my father!

*[He falls on his knees before him.]*

KING.

Rise, and leave me.

CARLOS.

Father!

KING *(tearing himself from him)*.

This trifling grows too bold.

CARLOS.

A son's devotion

Too bold! Alas!

KING.

And, to crown all, in tears!  
 Degraded boy! Away, and quit my sight!

CARLOS.

Now, then, or never!—Pardon, O my father!

KING.

Away, and leave my sight! Return to me  
 Disgraced, defeated, from the battle-field,  
 Thy sire shall meet thee with extended arms:  
 But thus in tears, I spurn thee from my feet  
 A coward's guilt alone should wash its stains  
 In such ignoble streams. The man who weeps  
 Without a blush, will ne'er want cause for tears!

CARLOS.

Who is this man? By what mistake of Nature  
 Has he thus stray'd amongst mankind? A tear  
 Is man's unerring, lasting attribute.

Whose eye is dry was ne'er of woman born !  
O ! teach the eye that ne'er hath overflowed,  
The timely science of a tear—thou'lt need  
The moist relief in some dark hour of woe.

KING.

Think'st thou to shake thy father's strong mistrust  
With specious words ?

CARLOS.

Mistrust ! Then I'll remove it—

Here will I hang upon my father's breast,  
Strain at his heart with vigour, till each shred  
Of that mistrust, which, with a rock's endurance,  
Clings firmly round it, piecemeal fall away.  
And who are they who drive me from the King  
My father's favour ?—What requital hath  
A monk to give a father for a son ?—  
What compensation can the Duke supply  
For a deserted and a childless age ?  
Wouldst thou be loved ? Here in this bosom springs  
A fresher, purer fountain, than e'er flowed  
From those dark, stagnant, muddy reservoirs,  
Which Philip's gold must first unlock.

KING.

No more,

Presuming boy ! For know the hearts thou slanderest,  
Are the approved, true servants of my choice.  
'Tis meet that thou do honour to them.

CARLOS.

Never !

I know my worth—all that your Alva dares—  
That, and much more, can Carlos. What cares he,  
A hireling ! for the welfare of the realm  
That never can be his ? What careth he,  
If Philip's hair grow gray with hoary age ?  
Your Carlos would have loved you :—O ! I dread  
To think that you the royal throne must fill  
Deserted and alone.

KING (*seemingly struck by this idea, stands in deep thought!*  
*after a pause*).

I am alone !

CARLOS (*approaching him with eagerness*).

You have been so till now. Hate me no more,

✓ And I will love you dearly, as a son :  
 But hate me now no longer ! O ! how sweet,  
 Divinely sweet it is, to feel our being  
 Reflected in another's beauteous soul ;  
 To see our joys gladden another's cheek,  
 Our pains bring anguish to another's bosom,  
 Our sorrows fill another's eye with tears !  
 How sweet, how glorious is it, hand in hand,  
 With a dear child, in inmost soul beloved,  
 To tread once more the rosy paths of youth,  
 And dream life's fond illusions o'er again !  
 How proud to live through endless centuries,  
 Immortal in the virtues of a son ;  
 How sweet to plant what his dear hand shall reap ;  
 To gather what will yield him rich return,  
 And guess how high his thanks will one day rise !  
 My father, of this early paradise  
 Your monks most wisely speak not.

KING (*not without emotion*).

O, my son,  
 Thou hast condemn'd thyself, in painting thus  
 A bliss this heart hath ne'er enjoyed from thee !

CARLOS.

Th' Omniscient be my judge ! You till this hour  
 Have still debarr'd me from your heart, and all  
 Participation in your royal cares.  
 The heir of Spain has been a very stranger  
 In Spanish land—a prisoner in the realm  
 Where he must one day rule. Say, was this just,  
 Or kind ? And often have I blush'd for shame,  
 And stood with eyes abash'd, to learn perchance,  
 From foreign envoys, or the general rumour,  
 Thy courtly doings at Aranjuez.

KING.

Thy blood flows far too hotly in thy veins.  
 Thou wouldst but ruin all.

CARLOS.

But try me, father !  
 'Tis true my blood flows hotly in my veins.  
 ( Full three-and-twenty years I now have lived,  
 And nought achieved for immortality.  
 I am aroused—I feel my inward powers—

My title to the throne arouses me  
From slumber, like an angry creditor ;  
And all the mis-spent hours of early youth,  
Like debts of honour, clamour in mine ears  
It comes at length, the glorious moment comes,  
That claims full interest on the entrusted talent.  
The annals of the world, ancestral fame,  
And glory's echoing trumpet urge me on.  
Now is the blessed hour at length arrived  
That opens wide to me the lists of honour.  
My King, my father!—dare I utter now  
The suit which led me hither ?

KING.

Still a suit?

Unfold it.

CARLOS.

The rebellion in Brabant  
Increases to a height—the traitors' madness  
By stern, but prudent, vigour must be met.  
The Duke, to quell the wild enthusiasm,  
Invested with the sovereign's power, will lead  
An army into Flanders. O, how full  
Of glory is such office!—and how suited  
To open wide the temple of renown  
To me, your son! To my hand, then, O King,  
Entrust the army; in thy Flemish lands  
I am well loved, and I will freely gage  
My life, for their fidelity and truth.

KING.

Thou speakest like a dreamer. This high office  
Demands a man—and not a stripling's arm.

CARLOS.

It but demands a human being, father :  
And that is what Duke Alva ne'er hath been.

KING.

Terror alone can tie rebellion's hands :  
Humanity were madness. Thy soft soul  
Is tender, son : they'll tremble at the Duke.  
Desist from thy request.

CARLOS.

Despatch me, Sire,  
To Flanders with the army—dare rely  
E'en on my tender soul. The name of Prince,  
The royal name emblazoned on my standard,  
Conquers where Alva's butchers but dismay.  
Here on my knees I crave it—this the first  
Petition of my life.—Trust Flanders to me.

KING (*contemplating CARLOS with a piercing look*).  
Trust my best army to thy thirst for rule,  
And put a dagger in my murderer's hand!

CARLOS.

Great God! and is this all—is this the fruit  
Of a momentous hour so long desired!

[*After some thought, in a milder tone.*]

Oh, speak to me more kindly—send me not  
Thus comfortless away—dismiss me not  
With this afflicting answer, oh, my father!  
Use me more tenderly, indeed I need it.  
This is the last resource of wild despair—  
It conquers every pow'r of firm resolve  
To bear it as a man—this deep contempt—  
My ev'ry suit denied: Let me away—  
Unheard and foil'd in all my fondest hopes,  
I take my leave. Now Alva and Domingo  
May proudly sit in triumph, where your son  
Lies weeping in the dust. Your crowd of courtiers,  
And your long train of cringing, trembling nobles,  
Your tribe of sallow monks, so deadly pale,  
All witness'd how you granted me this audience.  
Let me not be disgraced—O, strike me not  
With this most deadly wound—nor lay me bare  
To sneering insolence of menial taunts!  
“That strangers riot on your bounty, whilst  
Carlos, your son, may supplicate in vain.”  
And as a pledge that you would have me honour'd,  
Despatch me straight to Flanders with the army.

KING.

Urge thy request no further—as thou wouldst  
Avoid the King's displeasure.

CARLOS.

I must brave  
 My King's displeasure, and prefer my suit  
 Once more, it is the last. Trust Flanders to me!  
 I must away from Spain To linger here  
 Is to draw breath beneath the headsman's axe :  
 The air lies heavy on me in Madrid,  
 Like murder on a guilty soul—a change,  
 An instant change of clime alone can cure me.  
 If you would save my life, despatch me straight  
 Without delay to Flanders

KING (*with affected coldness*).

Invalids,  
 Like thee, my son—need to be tended close,  
 And ever watched by the physician's eye—  
 Thou stay'st in Spain—the Duke will go to Flanders.

CARLOS (*wildly*).

Assist me, ye good angels!

KING (*starting*).

Hold, what mean  
 These looks so wild?

CARLOS.

Father, do you abide  
 Immoveably by this determination?

KING.

It was the King's.

CARLOS.

Then my commission's done.

[*Exit in violent emotion.*]

## SCENE III.

*King, sunk in gloomy contemplation, walks a few steps up and down; Alva approaches with embarrassment.*

KING.

Hold yourself ready to depart for Brussels,  
 Upon a moment's notice.

ALVA.

I am ready  
 All is prepared, my Liege.

KING.

And your credentials  
Lie ready seal'd within my cabinet,—  
Meanwhile obtain an audience of the Queen,  
And bid the Prince farewell.

ALVA.

As I came in  
I met him with a look of frenzy wild  
Quitting the chamber; and your Majesty  
Is strangely moved, methinks, and bears the marks  
Of deep excitement—can it be the theme  
Of your discourse——

KING.

Concerned the Duke of Alva.  
[*The KING keeps his eye steadfastly fixed on him.*  
I'm pleas'd that Carlos hates my councillors,  
But I'm disturb'd that he—despises them.  
[*ALVA, colouring deeply, is about to speak.*  
No answer now: propitiate the Prince.

ALVA.

Sire!

KING.

'Tell me, who it was that warn'd me first  
Of my son's dark designs? I listened then  
To you, and not to him. I will have proof.  
And for the future, mark me, Carlos stands  
Nearer the throne—now Duke—you may retire.

[*The KING retires into his cabinet. Exit DUKE by another door.*

## SCENE IV.

*The Antechamber to the QUEEN'S Apartments. DON CARLOS enters in conversation with a PAGE. The Attendants retire at his approach.*

CARLOS.

For me this letter? And a key! How's this?  
And both delivered with such mystery!  
Come nearer boy:—from whom didst thou receive them!



PAGE (*mysteriously*).

It seem'd to me the Lady would be guess'd  
Rather than be described.

CARLOS (*starting*).

The Lady, what!

Who art thou, Boy?

[*Looking earnestly at the PAGE.*]

PAGE.

A Page that serves the Queen.

CARLOS (*affrighted, putting his hand to the PAGE's mouth*).  
Hold, on your life! I know enough: no more.

[*He tears open the letter hastily, and retires to read it; meanwhile DUKE ALVA comes, and passing the Prince, goes unperceived by him into the QUEEN'S apartment. CARLOS trembles violently and changes colour; when he has read the letter he remains a long time speechless, his eyes steadfastly fixed on it, at last he turns to the PAGE.*]

She gave you this herself?

PAGE.

With her own hands.

CARLOS.

She gave this letter to you then herself?  
Deceive me not: I ne'er have seen her writing.  
And I must credit thee, if thou canst swear it;  
But if thy tale be false, confess it straight,  
Nor put this fraud on me.

PAGE.

This fraud, on whom?

CARLOS (*looking once more at the letter, then at the PAGE with doubt and earnestness*).

Your parents—are they living? and your father—  
Serves he the King?—Is he a Spaniard born?—

PAGE.

He fell a Colonel on St. Quentin's field,  
Served in the cavalry of Savoy's Duke—  
His name Alonzo, Count of Henarez.

CARLOS (*taking his hand, and looking fixedly in his eyes*).  
The King gave you this letter?

PAGE (*with emotion*).

Gracious Prince,

Have I deserved these doubts?

CARLOS (*reading the letter*).

"This key unlocks  
The back apartments in the Queen's pavilion.  
The furthest room lies next a cabinet  
Wherein no listener's foot dare penetrate;  
Here may the voice of love without restraint  
Confess those tender feelings, which till now  
The heart with silent looks alone hath spoken.  
The timid lover gains an audience here,  
And sweet reward repays his secret sorrow."

[*As if awakening from a reverie.*]

I am not in a dream, I do not rave,—  
This is my right hand, this my sword—and these  
Are written words. 'Tis true—it is no dream.  
I am beloved, I feel I am beloved.

[*Unable to contain himself, he rushes hastily through the room, and raises his arms to heaven.*]

PAGE.

Follow me, Prince, and I will lead the way.

CARLOS.

Then let me first collect my scatter'd thoughts.  
The alarm of joy still trembles in my bosom.  
Did I e'er lift my fondest hopes so high,  
Or trust my fancy to so bold a flight?  
Show me the man can learn thus suddenly  
To be a god. I am not what I was.  
I feel another heaven—another sun  
That was not here before. She loves—she loves me!

PAGE (*leading him forward*).

But this is not the place: Prince! you forget.

CARLOS.

The King! My father!

[*His arms sink, he casts a timid look around, then collecting himself.*]

This is dreadful!—Yes,  
You're right, my friend. I thank you: I was not  
Just then myself. To be compell'd to silence,  
And bury in my heart this mighty bliss,  
Is terrible!

[*Taking the PAGE by the hand, and leading him aside.*]

Now hear! What thou hast seen,  
And what not seen, must be within thy breast

Entomb'd as in the grave. So now depart;  
I shall not need thy guidance; they must not  
Surprise us here! Now go.

[*The PAGE is about to depart.*  
Yet hold, a word!

[*The PAGE returns.*—CARLOS *lays his hand on his shoulder, and looks him steadily in the face.*

A direful secret hast thou in thy keeping,  
Which, like a poison of terrific power,  
Shivers the cup that holds it into atoms.  
Guard every look of thine, nor let thy head  
Guess at thy bosom's secret. Be thou like  
The senseless speaking trumpet that receives  
And echoes back the voice, but hears it not.  
Thou art a boy! Be ever so—continue  
The pranks of youth. My correspondent chose  
Her messenger of love with prudent skill!  
The King will ne'er suspect a serpent here.

PAGE.

And I, my Prince, shall feel right proud to know  
I am one secret richer than the King.

CARLOS.

Vain, foolish boy!—'tis this should make thee tremble.  
Approach me ever with a cold respect:  
Ne'er be induced by idle pride to boast  
How gracious is the Prince! No deadlier sin  
Canst thou commit, my son, than pleasing me.  
What'er thou hast in future for my ear,  
Give not to words—entrust not to thy lips,  
Ne'er on that common high road of the thoughts  
Permit thy news to travel.—Speak with an eye,  
A finger—I will answer with a look.  
The very air, the light, are Philip's creatures,  
And the deaf walls around are in his pay.  
Some one approaches; fly, we'll meet again.

[*The Queen's Chamber opens, and DUKE ALVA comes out.*

PAGE.

Be careful, Prince, to find the right apartment. [*Exit.*

CARLOS.

It is the Duke! Fear not, I'll find the way.

## SCENE V.

DON CARLOS. DUKE OF ALVA.

ALVA (*meeting him*).

Two words, most gracious Prince.

CARLOS.

Some other time. [*Going*.]

ALVA.

The place is not the fittest, I confess ;  
Perhaps your royal highness may be pleased  
To grant me audience in your private chamber.

CARLOS.

For what ? And why not here ? Only be brief.

ALVA.

The special object which has brought me hither,  
Is to return your Highness lowly thanks  
For your good services.

CARLOS.

Thanks ! thanks to me—

For what ? Duke Alva's thanks !

ALVA.

You scarce had left

His Majesty, ere I received in form  
Instructions to depart for Brussels.

CARLOS.

What !

For Brussels !

ALVA.

And to what, most gracious Prince,  
Must I ascribe this favour but to you—  
Your intercession with the King ?

CARLOS.

O, no !

Not in the least to me :—but, Duke, you travel,  
So Heav'n be with your Grace !

ALVA.

And is this all ?

It seems, indeed, most strange ! And has your Highness  
No further orders, then, to send to Flanders ?

CARLOS.

What should I have ?

ALVA.

Not long ago, it seem'd,  
That country's fate required your presence.

CARLOS.

How?

But yes, you're right,—it was so formerly;  
But now this change is better as it is.

ALVA.

I am amazed——

CARLOS.

You are an able General,  
No one doubts that—envy herself must own it.  
For me, I'm but a youth—so thought the King.  
The King was right, quite right. I see it now  
Myself, and am content—and so no more.  
God speed your journey, as you see, just now  
My hands are full, and weighty business presses.  
The rest to-morrow, or whene'er you will,  
Or when you come from Brussels.

ALVA.

What is this?

CARLOS.

The season favours, and your route will lie  
Through Milan, Lorraine, Burgundy, and on  
To Germany! What, Germany? Ay, true,  
In Germany it was—they know you there.  
'Tis April now, May, June,—in July, then,  
Just so! or at the latest, soon in August,—  
You will arrive in Brussel-, and no doubt  
We soon shall hear of your victorious deeds.  
You know the way to win our high esteem,  
And earn the crown of fame.

ALVA (*significantly*).

Indeed! condemn'd

By my own conscious insignificance!

CARLOS.

You're sensitive, my Lord, and with some cause,  
I own it was not fair to use a weapon  
Against your Grace you were unskill'd to wield.

ALVA.

Unskill'd !

CARLOS.

'Tis pity I've no leisure now  
To fight this worthy battle fairly out :  
But at some other time, we——

ALVA.

Prince, we both  
Miscalculate—but still in opposite ways.  
You, for example, overrate your age  
By twenty years, whilst on the other hand,  
I, by as many, underrate it——

CARLOS.

Well !

ALVA.

And this suggests the thought, how many nights  
Beside his lovely Lusitanian bride—  
Your mother—would the King right gladly give  
To buy an arm like this, to aid his crown.  
Full well he knows, far easier is the task  
To make a monarch than a monarchy ;  
Far easier too, to stock the world with kings  
Than frame an empire for a king to rule.

CARLOS.

Most true, Duke Alva, yet——

ALVA.

And how much blood,  
Your subjects' dearest blood, must flow in streams  
Before two drops could make a king of you.

CARLOS.

Most true, by Heaven ! and in two words comprised,  
All that the pride of merit has to urge  
Against the pride of fortune. But the moral—  
Now, Duke Alva !

ALVA.

Wo to the nursling babe  
Of royalty, that mocks the careful hand  
Which fosters it ! How calmly it may sleep  
On the soft cushion of our victories !  
The monarch's crown is bright with sparkling gems,  
'But no eye sees the wounds that purchased them.

This sword has given our laws to distant realms.  
Has blazed before the banner of the cross,  
And in these quarters of the globe, has traced  
Ensanguin'd furrows for the seed of faith.  
God was the judge in heaven, and I on earth.

CARLOS.

God, or the Devil—it little matters which;  
Yours was his chosen arm—that stands confess'd.  
And now no more of this. Some thoughts there are  
Whereof the memory pains me. I respect  
My father's choice,—my father needs an Alva!  
But that he needs him is not just the point  
I envy in him: a great man you are,  
This may be true, and I well nigh believe it,  
Only I fear your mission is begun  
Some thousand years too soon. Alva, methinks,  
Were just the man to suit the end of time.  
Then when the giant insolence of vice  
Shall have exhausted Heaven's enduring patience,  
And the rich waving harvest of misdeeds  
Stands in full ear, and asks a matchless reaper,  
Then should you fill the post. O God! my Paradise!  
My Flanders! But of this I must not think.  
'Tis said you carry with you a full store  
Of sentences of death already signed.  
This shows a prudent foresight! No more need  
To fear your foes' designs, or secret plots:  
O, father! ill indeed I've understood thee,  
Calling thee harsh, to save me from a post,  
Where Alva's self alone can fitly shine!—  
'Twas an unerring token of your love.

ALVA.

These words deserve——

CARLOS.

What!

ALVA.

But your birth protects you.

CARLOS (*seizing his sword*).

That calls for blood! Duke, draw your sword.

ALVA (*slightingly*).

On whom?

CARLOS (*pressing upon him*).

Draw, or I run you through.

ALVA.

Then be it so. [*They fight.*]

# SCENE VI.

*The QUEEN, DON CARLOS, DUKE ALVA.*

QUEEN (*coming from her room alarmed*).

How! naked swords?

[*To the PRINCE in an indignant and commanding tone.*]

Prince Carlos!

CARLOS (*agitated at the QUEEN's look, drops his arm, stands motionless, then runs to the DUKE, and embraces him.*

Pardon Duke!

Your pardon, Sir!—Forget, forgive it all!

[*Throws himself in silence at the QUEEN's feet, then rising suddenly, departs in confusion.*]

ALVA.

By Heaven, 'tis strange!

QUEEN (*remains a few moments as if in doubt, then retiring to her Apartment*).

A word with you, Duke Alva. [*Exit followed by the DUKE.*]

# SCENE VII.

*The PRINCESS EBOLI's Apartment.*

*The PRINCESS in a simple but elegant dress, playing on the lute. The QUEEN'S PAGE enters.*

PRINCESS (*starting up suddenly*).

He comes!

PAGE (*abruptly*).

Are you alone? I wonder much

He is not here already; but he must

Be here upon the instant.

PRINCESS.

Do you say *must*?

Then he *will* come, this much is certain then.



PAGE.

He's close upon my steps. You are beloved,  
Adored, and with more passionate regard  
Than mortal ever was, or can be loved.  
O! what a scene I witnessed!

PRINCESS (*impatiently draws him to her*).

Quick, you spoke  
With him! What said he? Tell me straight—  
How did he look? what were his words? And say—  
Did he appear embarrass'd, or confused?  
And did he guess who sent the key to him?  
Be quick!—or did he not? He did not guess  
At all, perhaps! or guess'd amiss! Come, speak,  
How! not a word to answer me? Oh fie!  
You never were so dull—so slow before,  
'Tis past all patience.

PAGE

Dearest Lady, hear me!  
Both key and note I placed within his hands,  
In the Queen's antechamber, and he started  
And gazed with wonder when I told him that  
A lady sent me!

PRINCESS.

Did he start? go on!  
That's excellent.—Proceed, what next ensued?

PAGE.

I would have told him more, but he grew pale,  
And snatch'd the letter from my hand, and said,  
With look of deadly menace, he knew all.  
He read the letter with confusion thro',  
And straight began to tremble.

PRINCESS.

He knew all!  
He knew it all? Were those his very words?

PAGE

He ask'd me, and again he ask'd, if you  
With your own hands had given me the letter?

PRINCESS.

If I? Then did he mention me by name?

PAGE.

By name! no name he mention'd: there might be  
Listeners, he said about the palace, who  
Might to the King disclose it.

PRINCESS (*surprised*).

Said he that?

PAGE.

He further said, it much concern'd the King;  
Deeply concern'd—to know of that same letter.

PRINCESS.

The King! Nay, are you sure you heard him right?  
The King! Was that the very word he used?

PAGE.

It was. He call'd it a most perilous secret,  
And warn'd me to be strictly on my guard,  
Never with word or look to give the King  
Occasion for suspicion.

PRINCESS (*after a pause with astonishment*).

All agrees!

It can be nothing else—he must have heard  
The tale—'tis very strange! Who could have told him?  
I wonder who? The eagle eye of Love  
Alone could pierce so far. But tell me further—  
He read the letter,—

PAGE.

Which, he said, convey'd  
Such bliss as made him tremble, and till then  
He had not dared to dream of. As he spoke,  
The Duke, by evil chance, approach'd the room,  
And this compell'd us——

PRINCESS (*angrily*).

What in all the world  
Could bring the Duke to him at such a time?  
What can detain him? Why appears he not?  
See how you've been deceived; how truly blest  
Might he have been already—in the time  
You've taken to describe his wishes to me!

PAGE.

The Duke, I fear——

PRINCESS.

Again, the Duke! What can  
The Duke want here? What should a warrior want  
With my soft dreams of happiness? He should  
Have left him there, or sent him from his presence.  
Where is the man may not be treated thus?  
But Carlos seems as little versed in love  
As in a woman's heart—he little knows  
What minutes are. But hark! I hear a step;  
Away, away. [PAGE hastens out.

Where have I laid my lute,  
I must not seem to wait for him. My song  
Shall be a signal to him.

## SCENE VIII.

*The PRINCESS, DON CARLOS.**The PRINCESS has thrown herself upon an ottoman, and plays**CARLOS (rushes in, he recognises the PRINCESS, and stands  
thunderstruck).*

Gracious Heav'n!

Where am I?

PRINCESS (*lets her lute fall, and meeting him*).

What! Prince Carlos! yes, in truth.

CARLOS.

Where am I? Senseless error, I have miss'd  
The right apartment.

PRINCESS.

With what dexterous skill  
Carlos contrives to hit the very room  
Where ladies sit alone!

CARLOS.

Your pardon, Princess!  
I found—I found the antechamber open.

PRINCESS.

Can it be possible? I fastened it  
Myself; at least I thought so——

CARLOS.

Ay! you thought.  
You only thought so—rest assured you did not.  
You meant to lock it, that I well believe:

But most assuredly it was not locked.

A lute's sweet sounds attracted me, some hand  
Touch'd it with skill; say, was it not a lute?

*[Looking round inquiringly]*

Yes, there it lies, and Heaven can bear me witness

I love the lute to madness. I became

All ear, forgot myself in the sweet strain,

And rush'd into the chamber to behold

The lovely eyes of the divine musician,

Who charm'd me with the magic of her tones.

PRINCESS.

Innocent curiosity, no doubt!

But it was soon appeased—as I can prove—

*[After a short silence, significantly.]*

I must respect the modesty, that has,

To spare a woman's blushes, thus involved

Itself in so much fiction.

CARLOS *(with sincerity)*.

Nay, I feel

I but augment my deep embarrassment,

In vain attempt to extricate myself.

Excuse me from a part I cannot play.

In this remote apartment, you perhaps

Have sought a refuge from the world—to pour

The inmost wishes of your secret heart

Remote from man's distracting eye. By me,

Unhappy that I am, your heavenly dreams

Are all disturb'd—and the atonement now

Must be my speedy absence.

*[Going.]*

PRINCESS *(surprised and confused, but immediately recovering herself)*

O! that step

Were cruel, Prince, indeed!

CARLOS.

Princess, I feel

What such a look in such a place imports:

This virtuous embarrassment has claims

To which my manhood never can be deaf.

Wo to the wretch whose boldness takes new fire

From the pure blush of maiden modesty!

I am a coward when a woman trembles.

*Prin Carlos*

Is't possible?—Such noble self-control  
In one so young, and he a monarch's son!  
Now, Prince, indeed you shall remain with me;  
It is my own request, and you must stay.  
Near such high virtue, every maiden fear  
Takes wing at once; but your appearance here  
Disturb'd me in a favourite air, and now  
Your penalty shall be to hear me sing it.

CARLOS (*sits down near the PRINCESS, not without reluctance*).

A penalty delightful as the sin!  
And sooth to say, the subject of the song  
Was so divine, again and yet again  
I'd gladly hear it.

PRINCESS.

What! you heard it all?  
Nay that was too bad, Prince. It was, I think,  
A song of love.

CARLOS.

And of successful love,  
If I mistake not—dear delicious theme  
From those most beauteous lips—but scarce so true,  
Methinks, as beautiful.

PRINCESS.

What! not so true?  
Then do you doubt the tale?

CARLOS.

I almost doubt  
That Carlos and the Princess Eboli,  
When they discourse on such a theme as love,  
May not quite understand each other's hearts.

[*The PRINCESS starts; he observes it, and continues with playful gallantry.*

Who would believe those rosy-tinted cheeks  
Conceal'd a heart torn by the pangs of love.  
Is it within the range of wayward chance  
That the fair Princess Eboli should sigh  
Unheard—unanswer'd? Love is only known  
By him who hopelessly persists in love.

PRINCESS (*with all her former vivacity*).

Hush! what a dreadful thought! this fate indeed  
Appears to follow you of all mankind,  
Especially to day.

[*Taking his hand with insinuating interest*

You are not happy,

Dear Prince—you're sad! I know too well you suffer,  
And wherefore, Prince? When with such loud appeal  
The world invites you to enjoy its bliss—

And nature on you pours her bounteous gifts,  
And spreads around you, all life's sweetest joys.

You, a great monarch's son, and more—far more—

E'en in your cradle with such gifts endow'd

As far eclipsed the splendour of your rank.

You, who in those strict courts where women rule,

And pass, without appeal, unerring sentence

On manly worth and honour, even there

Find partial judges.—You, who with a look

Can prove victorious, and whose very coldness

Kindles a flame; and who, when warm'd with passion,

Can make a Paradise, and scatter round

The bliss of heaven, the rapture of the gods.

The man whom nature has adorned with gifts

To render thousands happy, gifts which she

Bestows on few—that such a man as this

Should know what mis'ry is!—Thou, gracious Heaven,

That gav'st him all those blessings, why deny

Him eyes to see the conquests he has made?

CARLOS (*who has been lost in absence of mind, suddenly recovers himself by the silence of the PRINCESS, and starts up*).

Charming! inimitable! Princess, sing

That passage pray again.

PRINCESS (*looking at him with astonishment*).

Where, Carlos, were

Your thoughts the while?

CARLOS (*jumps up*).

By Heaven, you do remind me

In proper time—I must away—and quickly.

PRINCESS (*holding him back*).

Whither away?

CARLOS.

Into the open air.

Nay, do not hold me, Princess, for I feel  
As tho' the world behind me were in flames.

PRINCESS (*holding him forcibly back*).

What troubles you?—Whence come these strange, these wild  
Unnatural looks?—Nay, answer me—

[CARLOS stops to reflect, she draws him to the sofa to her.

Dear Carlos,

You need repose, your blood is feverish.  
Come sit by me: dispel these gloomy fancies.  
Ask yourself frankly, can your head explain  
The tumult of your heart—and if it can—  
Say, can no knight be found in all the court,  
No lady, generous as fair, to cure you—  
Rather, I should have said, to understand you?—  
What, no one?

CARLOS (*hastily, without thinking*).

If the Princess Eboli—

PRINCESS (*delighted, quickly*).

Indeed!

CARLOS.

Would write a letter for me, a few words  
Of kindly intercession, to my father—  
They say your influence is great.

PRINCESS.

Who says so?

Ha! was it jealousy that held thee mute!

[*Aside.*

CARLOS.

Perchance my story is already public.  
I had a sudden wish to visit Brabant,  
Merely to win my spurs—no more. The King,  
Kind soul, is fearful the fatigues of war  
Might spoil my singing!

PRINCESS.

Prince, you play me false.

Confess that, by this serpent subterfuge,  
You would mislead me. Look me in the face,  
Deceitful one! and say, would he whose thoughts  
Were only bent on warlike deeds—would he

E'er stoop so low as, with deceitful hand,  
To steal fair ladies' ribbons, when they drop,  
And then—your pardon! hoard them—with such care?

*[With light action she opens his shirt frill, and seizes a ribbon which is there concealed.]*

CARLOS (*drawing back with amazement*).

Nay, Princess—that's too much—I am betray'd.—  
You're not to be deceived.—You are in league  
With spirits and with demons!

PRINCESS.

Are you then  
Surprised at this? What will you wager, Carlos,  
But I recall some stories to your heart?  
Nay, try it with me; ask whate'er you please.  
And if the triflings of thy sportive fancy—  
The sound half-uttered, by the air absorb'd—  
The smile of joy check'd by returning gloom—  
If motions—looks from your own soul conceal'd,  
Have not escaped my notice—judge if I  
Can err, when thou wouldst have me understand thee?

CARLOS.

Why this is boldly ventured: I accept  
The wager, Princess. Then you undertake  
To make discoveries in my secret heart,  
Unknown e'en to myself.

PRINCESS (*displeased, but earnestly*).

Unknown to thee!

Reflect a moment, Prince! Nay, look around;  
This boudoir's not the chamber of the Queen,  
Where small deceits are practised with full licence.  
You start, a sudden blush o'erspreads your face,  
Who is so bold, so idle, you would ask,  
As to watch Carlos, when he deems himself  
From scrutiny secure? Who was it, then,  
At the last palace ball, observed you leave  
The Queen, your partner, standing in the dance,  
And join, with eager haste, the neighb'ring couple,  
To offer to the Princess Eboli  
The hand, your royal partner should have claim'd?  
An error, Prince, his Majesty himself,  
Who just then entered the apartment, noticed



CARLOS (*with ironical smile*).

His Majesty? And did he really so?  
Of all men he should not have seen it!

PRINCESS.

No;

Nor yet that other scene, within the chapel,  
Which doubtless Carlos hath long since forgotten.  
Prostrate before the holy Virgin's image,  
You lay in prayer, when suddenly you heard—  
'Twas not your fault—a rustling from behind  
Of ladies' dresses. Then did Philip's son,  
A youth of hero courage, tremble like  
A heretic before the Holy Office.  
On his pale lips died the half-utter'd prayer.  
In extacy of passion, Prince—the scene  
Was truly touching—for you seized the hand,  
The blessed Virgin's cold and holy hand,  
And shower'd your burning kisses on the marble.

CARLOS.

Princess, you wrong me: that was pure devotion!

PRINCESS.

Indeed! that's quite another thing. Perhaps  
It was the fear of losing, then, at cards,  
When you were seated with the Queen and me,  
And you with dexterous skill purloined my glove,  
That prompted you to play it for a card?  
[CARLOS starts surprised.]

CARLOS.

What words are these? O Heav'n, what have I done?

PRINCESS.

Nothing, I hope, of which you need repent!  
How pleasantly was I surprised to find  
Conceal'd within the glove a little note,  
Full of the warmest, tenderest romance.

CARLOS (*interrupting her suddenly*).

Mere poetry!—no more. My fancy teems  
With idle bubbles oft, which break as soon  
As they arise—and this was one of them;  
So prithee let us talk of it no more.

PRINCESS (*leaving him with astonishment, and regarding him for some time at a distance*).

I am exhausted—all attempts are vain  
To hold this youth. He still eludes my grasp.

[*Remains silent a few moments.*]

But stay! Perchance 'tis man's unbounded pride,  
That thus to add a zest to my delight  
Assumes a mask of timid diffidence.  
Tis so.

[*She approaches the PRINCE again, and looks at him doubtfully.*]

Explain yourself, Prince, I entreat you.  
For here I stand before a magic casket,  
Which all my keys are powerless to unlock.

CARLOS.

As I before you stand.

PRINCESS (*leaves him suddenly, walks a few steps up and down in silence, apparently lost in deep thought.—After a pause, gravely and solemnly*).

Then thus at last—

I must resolve to speak, and Carlos, you  
Shall be my judge. Yours is a noble nature,  
You are a Prince—a Knight—a man of honour.  
I throw myself upon your heart—protect me:  
Or if I'm lost beyond redemption's power,  
Give me your tears in pity for my fate.

[*The PRINCE draws nearer.*]

A daring favourite of the King demands  
My hand—his name Ruy Gomez, Count of Silva.  
The King consents—the bargain has been struck,  
And I am sold already to his creature.

CARLOS (*with evident emotion*).

Sold! you sold! Another bargain, then,  
Concluded by this royal southern trader!

PRINCESS.

No: but hear all—'tis not enough that I  
Am sacrificed to cold state policy,  
A snare is laid to entrap my innocence.  
Here is a letter will unmask the Saint!

[*CARLOS takes the paper, and without reading it listens with impatience to her recital.*]

Where shall I find protection, Prince? Till now  
My virtue was defended by my pride,  
At length——

CARLOS.

At length you yielded.—Yielded? No,  
For God's sake say not so!

PRINCESS.

Yielded!—to whom:  
Poor piteous reasoning—Weak beyond contempt  
Your haughty minds, who hold a woman's favour,  
And love's pure joys, as wares to traffic for!  
Love is the only treasure on the face  
Of this wide earth, that knows no purchaser  
Besides itself—love has no price but love.  
It is the costly gem, beyond all price,  
Which I must freely give away, or—bury '  
For ever unenjoyed—like that proud merchant  
Whom not the wealth of all the rich Rialto  
Could tempt—a great rebuke to kings!—to save  
From the deep ocean waves his matchless pearl,  
Too proud to barter it beneath its worth!

CARLOS (*aside*).

Now, by great Heaven, this woman's beautiful.

PRINCESS.

Call it caprice or pride, I ne'er will make  
Division of my joys. To him, alone,  
I choose as mine, I give up all for ever.  
One only sacrifice I make; but that  
Shall be eternal. (One true heart alone  
My love shall render happy; but that one  
I'll elevate to God. The keen delight  
Of mingling souls—the kiss—the swimming joys  
Of that delicious hour when lovers meet,  
The magic power of heavenly beauty—all  
Are sister colours of a single ray—  
Leaves of one single blossom. Shall I tear  
One petal from this sweet, this lovely flower,  
With reckless hand, and mar its beauteous chalice?  
Shall I degrade the dignity of woman,  
The masterpiece of the Almighty's hand,  
To charm the evening of a reveller?

CARLOS.

Incredible! that in Madrid should dwell  
This matchless creature! and unknown to me  
Until this day.

PRINCESS.

Long since had I forsaken  
This court—the world—and in some blest retreat  
Immured myself; but one tie binds me still  
Too firmly to existence. Perhaps—alas!  
'Tis but a phantom—but 'tis dear to me.  
I love—but am not loved in turn—

CARLOS (*full of ardour, going towards her*).

You are!

As true as God is throned in heaven! I swear  
You are—you are unspeakably beloved—

PRINCESS.

You swear it, you!—sure 'twas an angel's voice.  
O, if you swear it, Carlos, I'll believe it—  
Then I am truly loved!

CARLOS (*embracing her with tenderness*).

Bewitching maid,

Thou creature worthy of idolatry!  
I stand before thee now all eye, all ear,  
All rapture and delight. What eye hath seen thee—  
Under yon heaven what eye could e'er have seen thee,  
And boast he never loved? What dost thou here  
In Philip's royal court! Thou beauteous angel!  
Here amid monks and all their priestly train.  
This is no clime for such a lovely flower—  
They fain would rifle all thy sweets—full well  
I know their hearts. But it shall never be—  
Not whilst I draw life's breath—I fold thee thus  
Within my arms, and in these hands I'll bear thee  
E'en through a hell replete with mocking fiends.  
Let me thy guardian angel prove.

PRINCESS (*with a countenance full of love*).

O, Carlos!

How little have I known thee! and how richly  
With measureless reward thy heart repays

The weighty task of—comprehending thee !

[*She takes his hand and is about to kiss it.*

CARLOS (*drawing it back*).<sup>a</sup>

Princess ! What mean you ?

PRINCESS (*with tenderness and grace, looking at his hand attentively*).

O, this beauteous hand !

How lovely 'tis, and rich ! This hand has yet

Two costly presents to bestow !—a crown—

And Carlos' heart :—and both these gifts perchance

Upon one mortal !—both on one—O great

And godlike gift—almost too much for one !

How if you share the treasure, Prince ! A queen

Knows nought of love— and she who truly loves

Cares little for a crown ! 'Twere better, Prince,

Then to divide the treasure—and at once—

What says my Prince ? Have you done so already ?

Have you in truth ? And do I know the blest one ?

CARLOS.

'Thou shalt. I will unfold myself to thee,

To thy unspotted innocence, dear maid,

Thy pure unblemish'd nature. In this court

Thou art the worthiest—first—the only one

To whom this soul has stood reveal'd. Then, yes !

I will not now conceal it—Yes, I love !—

PRINCESS.

O cruel heart ! Does this avowal prove

So painful to thee ? Must I first deserve

Thy pity—ere I hope to win thy love ?

CARLOS (*starting*).

What say'st thou ?

PRINCESS.

So to trifle with me, Prince !

Indeed it was not well—and to deny

The key !<sup>b, c, d</sup>

CARLOS.

The key ! the key ! Oh yes, 'tis so !

[*After a dead silence.*

I see it all too plainly ! Gracious Heav'n !

[*His knees totter, he leans against a chair, and covers his face with his hands. A long silence on both sides. The PRINCESS screams and falls.*

PRINCESS.

Oh horrible ! What have I done ?

CARLOS.

Hurl'd down  
So far from all my heavenly joys ! 'Tis dreadful !

PRINCESS (*hiding her face in the cushion*).

O God ! What have I said ?

CARLOS (*kneeling before her*).

I am not guilty.

My passion—an unfortunate mistake—

By heaven, I am not guilty——

PRINCESS (*pushing him from her*).

Out of my sight,

For Heav'n's sake !

CARLOS.

No, I will not leave thee thus.

In this dread anguish leave thee——

PRINCESS (*pushing him forcibly away*).

O in pity——

For mercy's sake, away——out of my sight !

Wouldst thou destroy me ? How I hate thy presence !

[CARLOS *going*.

Give, give me back the letter and the key.—

Where is the other letter ?

CARLOS.

The other letter ?

What other ?

PRINCESS.

That from the King, to me——

CARLOS (*terrified*).

From whom ?

PRINCESS.

The one I just now gave you.

CARLOS.

From the King!

To you!

PRINCESS.

O heavens, how dreadfully have I  
Involved myself! The letter, Sir! I must  
Have it again.

CARLOS.

The letter from the King!

To you!

PRINCESS.

The letter! give it, I implore you  
By all that's sacred—give it—

CARLOS.

What, the letter  
That will unmask the saint!—Is this the letter?

PRINCESS.

Now I'm undone! Quick, give it me——

CARLOS.

The letter——

PRINCESS (*wringing her hands in despair*).

What have I done?—O dreadful, dire imprudence!

CARLOS.

This letter comes then from the King! Princess,  
That changes all indeed, and quickly too.  
This letter is beyond all value—priceless!  
All Philip's crowns are worthless and too poor  
To win it from my hands. I'll keep this letter.

PRINCESS (*throwing herself prostrate before him as he is going*).  
Almighty Heaven! then I am lost for ever! *[Exit CARLOS.]*

## SCENE IX.

*The PRINCESS alone.*

(*She seems overcome with surprise and is confounded. After  
CARLOS' departure she hastens to call him back.*)

PRINCESS.

Prince, but one word! Prince, hear me. He is gone.  
And this, too, I am doom'd to bear—his scorn!

And I am left in lonely wretchedness,  
Rejected and despised!

*[Sinks down upon a chair.—After a pause.]*

And yet not so—

I'm but displaced—supplanted by some wanton.  
He loves! of that, no longer doubt is left:  
He has himself confess'd it—but my rival—  
Who can she be? Happy, thrice happy one!  
This much stands clear—he loves, where he should not!  
He dreads discovery—and from the King  
He hides his guilty passion! Why from him  
Who would so gladly hail it? Or, is it not  
The father that he dreads so in the parent?—  
When the King's wanton purpose was disclosed  
His features glow'd with triumph—boundless joy  
Flash'd in his eyes—his rigid virtue fled—  
Why was it mute in such a cause as this?  
Why should he triumph? What hath he to gain  
If Philip to his queen——

*[She stops suddenly, as if struck by a thought, then drawing the ribbon hastily from her bosom which she had taken from CARLOS, she seems to recognise it.]*

Fool that I am!—

At length 'tis plain. Where have my senses been?  
My eyes are opened now. They loved each other  
Long before Philip wooed her, and the Prince  
Ne'er saw me but with her! She, she alone  
Was in his thoughts when I believed myself  
The object of his true and boundless love.  
O matchless error!—and have I betray'd  
My weakness to her?

*[Pauses.]*

Should his love prove hopeless?

Who can believe it? Would a hopeless love  
Persist in such a struggle? Call'd to revel  
In joys for which a monarch sighs in vain!  
A hopeless love makes no such sacrifice.  
What fire was in his kiss! How tenderly  
He press'd my bosom to his beating heart!  
Well nigh the trial had proved dangerous  
To his romantic, unrequited passion!



With joy he seized the key he fondly thought  
 The Queen had sent:—in this gigantic stride  
 Of love he puts full credence—and he comes—  
 In very truth comes here—and so imputes  
 To Philip's wife, a deed so madly rash.  
 And would he so, had love not made him bold?  
 'Tis clear as day—his suit is heard—she loves!  
 By Heaven, this saintly creature burns with passion.  
 How subtle too she is! With fear I trembled  
 Before this lofty paragon of virtue!  
 She tower'd beside me, an exalted being,  
 And in her beams I felt myself eclipsed;  
 I envied her the lovely, cloudless calm,  
 That kept her soul from earthly tumults free.  
 And was this soft serenity but show?  
 Would she at both feasts revel, holding up  
 Her virtue's godlike splendour to our gaze,  
 And riot in the secret joys of vice?  
 And shall the false dissembler cozen thus,  
 And win a safe immunity from this——  
 That no avenger comes? By heaven she shall not!  
 I once adored her,—~~that~~ demands revenge:—  
 The King shall know her treachery—the King!

'Tis the sure way to win the Monarch's ear! [After a pause.  
[Exit.]

## SCENE X.

*A Chamber in the Royal Palace.*

DUKE OF ALVA, FATHER DOMINGO.

DOMINGO.

Something to tell me?

ALVA.

Ay! a thing of moment,  
 Of which I've made discovery to-day,  
 And I would have your judgment on it.

DOMINGO.

How!

Discovery! To what do you allude?

ALVA.

Prince Carlos and myself this morning met  
 In the Queen's antechamber. I received

An insult from him—we were both in heat—  
 The strife grew loud—and we had drawn our swords.  
 Alarm'd, from her apartment rush'd the Queen.  
 She stepped between us,—with commanding eye  
 Of conscious power, she looked upon the Prince.  
 'Twas but a single glance,—but his arm dropp'd.  
 He fell upon my bosom—gave me then  
 A warm embrace, and vanish'd.

DOMINGO (*after a pause*).

This seems strange!

It brings a something to my mind, my Lord!  
 And thoughts like these I own have often sprung  
 Within my breast; but I avoid such fancies—  
 To no one have I e'er confided them.  
 There are such things as double-edged swords  
 And untrue friends:—I fear them both. 'Tis hard  
 To judge among mankind, but still more hard  
 To know them thoroughly. Words slipt at random  
 Are confidants offended—therefore I  
 Buried my secret in my breast, till time  
 Should drag it forth to light. 'Tis dangerous  
 To render certain services to kings.  
 They are the bolts, which, if they miss the mark,  
 Recoil upon the archer! I could swear  
 Upon the Sacrament to what I saw.  
 Yet one eye-witness—one word overheard—  
 A scrap of paper—would weigh heavier far  
 Than my most strong conviction! Cursed fate  
 That we are here in Spain!

ALVA.

And why in Spain?

DOMINGO.

There is a chance in every Court but this,  
 For passion to forget itself, and fall.  
 Here it is warn'd by ever-wakeful laws.  
 Our Spanish Queens would find it hard to sin—  
 And *only there* do they meet obstacles,  
 Where best 'twould serve our purpose to surprise them.

ALVA.

But listen farther: Carlos had to-day

An audience of the King ; the interview  
 Lasted an hour, and earnestly he sought  
 The Government of Flanders for himself.  
 Loudly he begg'd, and fervently. I heard him  
 In the adjoining cabinet. His eyes  
 Were red with tears when I encountered him.  
 At noon he wore a look of lofty triumph,  
 And vow'd his joy at the King's choice of me.  
 He thank'd the King. "Matters are changed," he said,  
 "And things go better now." He's no dissembler :  
 How shall I reconcile such contradictions ?  
 The Prince exults to see himself rejected,  
 And I receive a favour from the King  
 With marks of anger !—What must I believe ?  
 In truth, this new-born dignity doth sound  
 Much more like banishment, than royal favour !

## DOMINGO.

And is it come to this at last ? to this ?  
 And has one moment crumbled into dust  
 What cost us years to build ? And you so calm,  
 So perfectly at ease !—Know you this youth ?  
 Do you foresee the fate we may expect  
 Should he attain to power ? The Prince ! No foe  
 Am I of his. Far other cares than these  
 Gnaw at my rest—cares for the throne—for God,  
 And for His holy Church !—The royal Prince—  
 (I know him, I can penetrate his soul,)  
 Has formed a horrible design, Toledo !  
 The wild design—to make himself the Regent,  
 And set aside our pure and sacred faith.  
 His bosom glows with some new-fangled virtue,  
 Which, proud and self-sufficient, scorns to rest  
 For strength on any creed. He dares to *think* !  
 His brain is all on fire, with wild chimeras—  
 He reverences the people ! And is this  
 A man to be our King ?

## ALVA.

Fantastic dreams !

No more. A boy's ambition, too, perchance  
 To play some lofty part ! What can he less ?  
 These thoughts will vanish when he's call'd to rule.

DOMINGO.

I doubt it! Of his freedom he is proud,  
And scorns those strict restraints, all men must bear  
Who hope to govern others. Would he suit  
Our throne? His bold gigantic mind  
Would burst the barriers of our policy.  
In vain I sought to enervate his soul  
In the loose joys of this voluptuous age,  
He stood the trial. Fearful is the spirit  
That rules this youth; and Philip soon will see  
His sixtieth year.

ALVA.

Your vision stretches far!

DOMINGO.

He and the Queen are both alike in this.  
Already works, conceal'd in either breast,  
The poisonous wish for change and innovation.  
Give it but way, 'twill quickly reach the throne.  
I know this Valois! We may tremble for  
The secret vengeance of this quiet foe,  
If Philip's weakness hearken to her voice!  
Fortune so far hath smiled upon us. Now  
We must anticipate the foe—and both  
Shall fall together in one fatal snare.  
Let but a hint of such a thing be dropp'd  
Before the King, proved or unproved, it rocks not;  
Our point is gain'd if he but waver. We  
Ourselves have not a doubt; and once convinced,  
'Tis easy to convince another's mind.  
Be sure we shall discover more, if we  
Start with the faith that more remains conceal'd.

ALVA.

But soft! A vital question! Who is he  
Will undertake the task to tell the King?

DOMINGO.

Nor you, nor I! Now shall you learn, what long  
My busy spirit, full of its design,  
Has been at work with, to achieve its ends.  
Still is there wanting to complete our league,  
A third important personage. The King

Loves the young Princess Eboli—and I  
 Foster this passion, for my own designs.  
 I am his go-between. She shall be school'd  
 Into our plot. If my plan fail me not,  
 In this young lady, shall a close ally—  
 A very Queen, bloom for us. She herself  
 Asked me, but now, to meet her in this chamber.  
 I'm full of hope. And in one little night  
 A Spanish maid may blast this Valois' lily.

ALVA.

What do you say! Can I have heard aright?  
 By Heaven! I'm all amazement. Compass this,  
 And I'll bow down to thee, Dominican!  
 The day's our own.

DOMINGO.

Soft! Some one comes: 'tis she—

'Tis she herself!

ALVA.

I'm in the adjoining room

If you should——

DOMINGO.

Be it so: I'll call you in. [*Exit ALVA.*]

## SCENE XI.

PRINCESS, DOMINGO.

DOMINGO.

At your command, Princess.

PRINCESS.

We are perhaps  
 Not quite alone? [*Looking inquisitively after the DUKE.*]  
 You have, as I observe,  
 A witness still by you.

DOMINGO.

How?

PRINCESS.

Who was he

That left your side but now?

DOMINGO.

It was Duke Alva,  
 Most gracious Princess, he requests you will  
 Admit him to an audience after me.

PRINCESS.

Duke Alva! How What can he want with me?  
You can, perhaps, inform me?

DOMINGO.

I?—and that

Before I learn to what important chance  
I owe the favour, long denied, to stand  
Before the Princess Eboli once more?

*[Pauses awaiting her answer.]*

Has any circumstance occur'd at last  
To favour the King's wishes? Have my hopes  
Been not in vain, that more deliberate thought  
Would reconcile you to an offer, which  
Caprice alone and waywardness could spurn?  
I seek your presence full of expectation——

PRINCESS

Was my last answer to the King convey'd?

DOMINGO.

I have delay'd to inflict this mortal wound.  
There still is time, it rests with you,  
Princess, to mitigate its rigour.

PRINCESS.

Tell the King

That I expect him.

DOMINGO.

May I, lovely Princess,  
Indeed accept this as your true reply?

PRINCESS.

I do not jest.—By Heaven, you make me tremble!  
What have I done to make e'en you grow pale?

DOMINGO.

Nay, Lady, this surprise—so sudden—I  
Can scarcely comprehend it.

PRINCESS.

Reverend Sir!

You shall not comprehend it.—Not for all  
The world would I you comprehended it.  
Enough for you it is so—spare yourself  
The trouble to investigate in thought,  
Whose eloquence hath wrought this wondrous change.  
But for your comfort let me add, you have

No hand in this misdeed,—nor has the Church.  
 Although you've proved, that cases might arise  
 Wherein the Church, to gain some noble end,  
 Might use the persons of her youthful daughters !  
 Such reasonings move not me : such motives, pure,  
 Right reverend Sir, are far too high for me.

DOMINGO.

When they become superfluous, your Grace,  
 I willingly retract them.

PRINCESS.

Seek the King,  
 And ask him as from me, that he will not  
 Mistake me in this business. What I have been,  
 That am I still. 'Tis but the course of things  
 Has changed. When I in anger spurn'd his suit,  
 I deem'd him truly happy in possessing  
 Earth's fairest Queen.—I thought his faithful wife  
 Deserved my sacrifice—I thought so then,  
 But now I'm undeceived.

DOMINGO.

Princess, go on !  
 I hear it all—we understand each other.

PRINCESS.

Enough. She is found out. I will not spare her.  
 The hypocrite's unmask'd ! She has deceived  
 The King, all Spain, and me. She loves, I know  
 She loves ! I can bring proofs, will make you tremble.  
 The King has been deceived—but he shall not,  
 By Heaven, go unrevenged ! The saintly mask  
 Of pure and superhuman self-denial  
 I'll tear from her deceitful brow, that all  
 May see the forehead of the shameless sinner.  
 'Twill cost me dear, but here my triumph lies,  
 That it will cost her infinitely more.

DOMINGO.

Now all is ripe, let me call in the Duke.

[*Goes out.*]

PRINCESS (*astonished*).

What means all this ?

## SCENE XII.

*The PRINCESS, DUKE ALVA, DOMINGO.*

DOMINGO (*leading the DUKE in*).

Our tidings, good my Lord,  
Come somewhat late. The Princess Eboli  
Reveals to us a secret, we had meant  
Ourselves to impart to her.

ALVA.

My visit, then,  
Will not so much surprise her, but I never  
Trust my own eyes in these discoveries.  
They need a woman's more discerning glance.

PRINCESS.

Discoveries ! How mean you ?

DOMINGO.

Would we knew  
What place and fitter season you——

PRINCESS.

Just so !

To-morrow noon, I will expect you both.  
Reasons I have, why this clandestine guilt  
Should from the King no longer be conceal'd.

ALVA.

'Tis this that brings us here. The King must know it.  
And he should hear the news from you, Princess,  
From you alone :—for to what tongue would he  
Afford such ready credence, as to yours,  
Friend and companion ever of his spouse ?

DOMINGO.

As yours, who more than any one, at will  
Can o'er him exercise supreme command.

ALVA.

I am the Prince's open enemy

DOMINGO

And that is what the world believes of me.  
The Princess Eboli's above suspicion  
We are compell'd to silence, but your duty,  
The duty of your office, calls on you  
To speak. The King shall not escape our hands.  
Let your hints rouse him, we'll complete the work



ALVA.

It must be done at once, without delay;  
Each moment now is precious. In an hour  
The order may arrive for my departure.

DOMINGO (*after a short pause, turns to the PRINCESS*)

Cannot some letters be discover'd? Truly,  
An intercepted letter from the Prince  
Would work with rare effect. Ay! let me see—  
Is it not so? You sleep, Princess, I think,  
In the same chamber with her Majesty?

PRINCESS.

The next to hers. But of what use is that?

DOMINGO.

Oh for some skill in locks! Have you observed  
Where she is wont to keep her casket key?

PRINCESS (*in thought*).

Yes! that might lead to something—yes, I think  
The key is to be found.

DOMINGO.

Letters, you know,  
Need messengers. Her retinue is large—  
Who do you think could put us on the scent?  
Gold can do much.

ALVA.

Can no one tell us whether  
The Prince has any trusty confidant?

DOMINGO.

Not one; in all Madrid not one.

ALVA.

That's strange!

DOMINGO.

Rely on me in this. He holds in scorn  
The universal court. I have my proofs.

ALVA.

Stay! It occurs to me—as I was leaving  
The Queen's apartment, I beheld the Prince  
In private conference with a page of hers.

PRINCESS (*suddenly interrupting*).

Oh, no! that must have been of something else.

DOMINGO.

Could we not ascertain the fact? It seems  
Suspicious.

[To the DUKE.]

Did you know the page, my Lord?

PRINCESS.

Some trifle—what else could it be? Enough—  
I'm sure of that. So we shall meet again  
Before I see the King; and by that time  
We may discover much.

DOMINGO (*leading her aside*).

What of the King?

Say may he hope? May I assure him so?  
And the entrancing hour which shall fulfil  
His fond desires, what shall I say of that?

PRINCESS.

In a few days I will feign sickness, and  
Shall be excused from waiting on the Queen.  
Such is, you know, the custom of the Court,  
And I may then remain in my apartment.

DOMINGO.

Tis well devised! Now the great game is won,  
And we may bid defiance to all Queens!

PRINCESS.

Hark, I am called. I must attend the Queen,  
So fare you well.

[Exit.]

## SCENE XIII.

ALVA and DOMINGO.

DOMINGO (*after a pause, during which he has watched  
the PRINCESS*).

My Lord! these roses, and——

Your battles——

ALVA.

And your God—why even so!  
Thus we'll await the lightning that shall scathe us!

[Exeunt.]

## SCENE XIV.

A Carthusian Convent.

DON CARLOS and the PRIOR.

CARLOS (*to the PRIOR, as he comes in*).  
Been here already?—I am sorry for it.

PRIOR.

Yes, thrice since morning. 'Tis about an hour  
Since he went hence.

CARLOS.

But he will sure return  
Has he not left some message ?

PRIOR.

Yes ; he promised

To come again at noon.

CARLOS (*going to a window, and looking round the country*).

Your convent lies

Far from the public road. Yonder are seen  
The turrets of Madrid—just so—and there  
The Mansasares flows. The scenery is  
Exactly to my wish, and all around  
Is calm and still as secrecy itself.

PRIOR.

Or as the entrance to another world !

CARLOS.

Most worthy Sir, to your fidelity  
And honour, have I now entrusted all  
I hold most dear and sacred in the world.  
No mortal man must know, or e'en suspect,  
With whom I here hold secret assignation.  
Most weighty reasons prompt me to deny,  
To all the world, the friend whom I expect,  
Therefore I choose this convent.—Are we safe  
From traitors and surprise ? You recollect  
What you have sworn.

PRIOR.

Good Sir, rely on us.

A King's suspicion cannot pierce the grave,  
And curious ears haunt only those resorts  
Where wealth and passions dwell—but from these walls  
The world's for ever banish'd.

CARLOS.

You may think,  
Perhaps, beneath this seeming fear and caution  
There lies a guilty conscience ?

PRIOR.

I think nothing.

CARLOS.

If you imagine this, most holy father,  
You err—indeed you err. My secret shuns  
The sight of man—but not the eye of God.

PRIOR.

Such things concern us little. This retreat  
To guilt, and innocence alike, is open.  
And whether thy designs be good or ill,  
Thy purpose criminal or virtuous,—that  
We leave to thee to settle with thy heart.

CARLOS (*with warmth*).

Our purpose never can disgrace your God.  
'Tis his own noblest work. To you, indeed,  
I may reveal it.

PRIOR.

To what end, I pray?

Forego, dear Prince, this needless explanation.  
The world and all its troubles have been long  
Shut from my thoughts—in preparation for  
My last long journey. Why recall them to me,  
For the brief space that must precede my death?  
'Tis little for salvation that we need—  
But the bell rings, and summons me to prayer.

[Exit PRIOR.]

## SCENE XV.

DON CARLOS; *the MARQUIS POSA enters.*

CARLOS.

At length once more,—at length——

MARQUIS.

O, what a trial  
For the impatience of a friend! The sun  
Has risen twice—twice set—since Carlos's fate  
Has been resolved, and am I only now  
To learn it: speak,—you're reconciled!——

CARLOS.

With whom?

MARQUIS.

'The King! And Flanders, too,—its fate is settled!

CARLOS.

The Duke sets out to-morrow. That is fixed——

MARQUIS.

That cannot be—it is not surely so.  
Can all Madrid be so deceived? 'Tis said  
You had a private audience, and the King——

CARLOS.

Remain'd inflexible, and we are now  
Divided more than ever.

MARQUIS.

Do you go

To Flanders!

CARLOS.

No!

MARQUIS.

Alas! my blighted hopes!

CARLOS.

Of this hereafter. Oh, Roderigo! since  
We parted last, what have I not endured?  
But first thy counsel! I must speak with her!

MARQUIS.

Your mother? No! But wherefore?

CARLOS.

I have hopes——

But you turn pale! Be calm—I should be happy.  
And I shall be so: but of this anon —  
Advise me now, how I may speak with her.

MARQUIS.

What mean you? What new feverish dream is this?

CARLOS.

By the great God of wonders 'tis no dream!  
'Tis truth, reality——

[*Taking out the KING's letter to the PRINCESS ENOLI.*  
Contain'd in this

Important paper—Yes, the Queen is free,—  
Free before men and in the eyes of Heaven;  
There read, and cease to wonder at my words.

(MARQUIS *opening the letter*).

What do I here behold? The King's own hand!

[*After he has read it.*

To whom address'd?

CARLOS.

To Princess Eboli.

Two days ago, a page who serves the Queen,  
Brought me, from unknown hands, a key and letter,  
Which said that in the left wing of the palace,  
Where the Queen lodges, lay a cabinet,—  
That there a lady whom I long had loved  
Awaited me. I straight obey'd the summons.

MARQUIS.

Fool! madman! you obey'd it——

CARLOS.

Not that I

The writing knew; but there was only one  
Such woman, who could think herself adored  
By Carlos. With delight intoxicated  
I hasten'd to the spot. A heavenly song,  
Re-echoing from the innermost apartment,  
Served me for guide. I reached the cabinet—  
I entered and beheld—conceive my wonder!—

MARQUIS.

I guess it all——

CARLOS.

I had been lost for ever.

But that I fell into an angel's hands!  
She, hapless chance, by my imprudent looks  
Deceived, had yielded to the sweet delusion  
And deem'd herself the idol of my soul.  
Moved by the silent anguish of my breast,  
With thoughtless generosity, her heart  
Nobly determined to return my love;  
Deeming respectful fear had caused my silence,  
She dared to speak, and all her lovely soul  
Laid bare before me.

MARQUIS.

And with calm composure,

You tell this tale! The Princess Eboli  
Saw through your heart; and doubtless she has pierced  
The inmost secret of your hidden love.  
You've wrong'd her deeply, and she rules the King.

CARLOS (*confidently*).

But she is virtuous!

MARQUIS.

She may be so

From Love's mere selfishness. But much I fear  
 Such virtue—well I know it: know how little  
 It hath the power to soar to that *ideal*,  
 Which, first conceived in sweet and stately grace,  
 From the pure soul's maternal soil, puts forth  
 Spontaneous shoots, nor asks the gard'ner's aid  
 To nurse its lavish blossoms into life.  
 'Tis but a foreign plant, with labour rear'd,  
 And warmth that poorly imitates the south,  
 In a cold soil and an unfriendly clime.  
 Call it what name you will—or education,  
 Or principle, or artificial virtue——  
 Won from the heat of youth by art and cunning,  
 In conflicts manifold—all noted down  
 With scrupulous reckoning to that Heaven's account,  
 Which is its aim, and will requite its pains.  
 Ask your own heart! Can she forgive the Queen  
 That you should scorn her dearly-purchased virtue,  
 To pine in hopeless love for Philip's wife.

CARLOS.

Know'st thou the Princess, then, so well?

MARQUIS.

Not I—

I've scarcely seen her twice. And yet thus much  
 I may remark. 'To me she still appears  
 To shun alone the nakedness of vice,  
 'Too weakly proud of her imagined virtue.'  
 And then I mark the Queen! How different, Carlos,  
 Is everything that I behold in her!  
 In native dignity, serene and calm,  
 Wearing a careless cheerfulness—unschool'd  
 In all the train'd restraints of conduct, far  
 Removed from boldness and timidity,  
 With firm heroic step, she walks along  
 The narrow middle path of rectitude,  
 Unconscious of the worship she compels,  
 Where she of self-approval never dream'd.

Say, does my Carlos in this mirror trace  
The features of his Eboli? The Princess  
Was constant while she loved; love was the price;  
The understood condition of her virtue.  
You fail'd to pay that price—'twill therefore fall.

CARLOS (*with warmth*).

No, no! [*Hastily pacing the Apartment.*]

I tell thee, no! And Roderigo,  
Ill it becomes thee, thus to rob thy Carlos  
Of his high trust in human excellence,  
His chief, his dearest joy!

MARQUIS.

Deserve I this?  
Friend of my soul, this would I never do—  
By Heaven I would not! O this Eboli!  
She were an angel to me, and before  
Her glory would I bend me prostrate down,  
In reverence deep as thine, if she were not  
The mistress of thy secret.

CARLOS.

See how vain,  
How idle are thy fears! What proofs has she  
'That will not stamp her maiden brow with shame;  
Say will she purchase with her own dishonour  
'The wretched satisfaction of revenge?

MARQUIS.

Ay! to recall a blush, full many a one  
Has doom'd herself to infamy.

CARLOS (*with increased vehemence*).

Nay, that  
Is far too harsh—and cruel! She is proud  
And noble; well I know her, and fear nothing.  
Vain are your efforts to alarm my hopes.  
I must speak to my mother.

MARQUIS.

Now? for what?

CARLOS.

Because I've nothing more to care for now,  
And I must know my fate. Only contrive  
That I may speak with her.



MARQUIS.

And wilt thou show

This letter to her?

CARLOS.

Question me no more,

But quickly find the means that I may see her.

MARQUIS (*significantly*).

Didst thou not tell me that thou lov'st thy mother?

And wouldst thou really show this letter to her?

[CARLOS fixes his eyes on the ground, and remains silent.

I read a something, Carlos, in thy looks

Unknown to me before. Thou turn'st thine eyes

Away from me.—Then is it true, and have I

Judged thee aright? Here, let me see that paper.

[CARLOS gives him the letter, and the MARQUIS tears it.

CARLOS.

What! art thou mad?

[*Moderating his warmth.*

In truth—I must confess it,—

That letter was of deepest moment to me.

MARQUIS.

So it appear'd: on that account I tore it.

[*The MARQUIS casts a penetrating look on the PRINCE, who surveys him with doubt and surprise.—A long silence.*

Now speak to me with candour, Carlos. What

Have desecrations of the royal bed

To do with thee—thy love? Dost thou fear Philip?

How are a husband's violated duties

Allied with thee and thy audacious hopes?

Has he sinn'd there, where thou hast placed thy love?

Now then, in truth, I learn to comprehend thee—

How ill till now I've understood thy love!

CARLOS.

What dost thou think, Roderigo?

MARQUIS.

Oh, I feel

From what it is that I must wean myself.

Once it was otherwise!—Yes, once thy soul

Was bounteous, rich, and warm, and there was room

For a whole world in thy expanded heart.

Those feelings are extinct—all swallow'd up

In one poor petty, selfish passion. Now

Thy heart is wither'd, dead! No tears hast thou

For the unhappy fate of wretched Flanders—

No, not another tear. O, Carlos! see

How poor, how beggarly, thou hast become,

Since all thy love has centered in thyself!

CARLOS (*flings himself into a chair.—After a pause, with scarcely suppressed tears,*)

Too well I know thou lov'st me now no more!

MARQUIS.

Not so, my Carlos. Well I understand

This fiery passion: 'tis the misdirection

Of feelings pure and noble in themselves.

The Queen belong'd to thee: the King, thy father,

Despoil'd thee of her—yet till now thou hast

Been modestly distrustful of thy claims.

Philip, perhaps, was worthy of her! Thou

Scarce dared to breathe his sentence in a whisper:

This letter has resolved thy doubts, and proved

Thou art the worthier man. With haughty joy

Thou saw'st before thee rise the doom that waits

On tyranny convicted of a theft,

But thou wert proud to be the injured one.

Wrongs undeserv'd great souls can calmly suffer.

Yet here thy fancy played thee false: thy pride

Was touch'd with satisfaction, and thy heart

Allow'd itself to hope: I plainly saw

This time, at least, thou didst not know thyself.

CARLOS (*with emotion*).

'Thou'rt wrong, Roderigo; for my thoughts were far

Less noble than thy goodness would persuade me.

MARQUIS.

And am I then e'en here so little known?

See, Carlos, when thou errest, 'tis my way,

Amid a hundred virtues, still to find

That *one* to which I may impute *thy* fall.

Now, then, we understand each other better,

And thou shalt have an audience of the Queen.

CARLOS (*falling on his neck*).

O, how I blush beside thee!

MARQUIS.

Take my word,

And leave the rest to me. A wild, bold thought,

A happy thought is dawning in my mind;

And thou shalt hear it from a fairer mouth,  
I hasten to the Queen. - Perhaps to-morrow  
Thy wish may be achieved. Till then, my Carlos,  
Forget not this—"That a design conceived  
Of lofty reason, which involves the fate,  
'The sufferings of mankind, tho' it be baffled  
Ten thousand times, should never be abandoned."  
Dost hear?—Remember Flanders.

CARLOS.

Yes! all, all  
That thou and virtue bid me not forget.

MARQUIS (*going to a window*).

The time is up—I hear thy suite approaching.

[*They embrace.*]

Crown Prince again, and vassal.

CARLOS.

Dost thou go

Straight to Madrid?

MARQUIS.

Yes, straight.

CARLOS.

Hold! one word more.

How nearly it escaped me! Yet 'twas news  
Of deep importance. "Every letter now  
Sent to Brabant is opened by the King!"  
So be upon thy guard. The royal post  
Has secret orders.

MARQUIS.

How have you learnt this?

CARLOS.

Don Raymond Taxis is my trusty friend.

MARQUIS (*after a pause*).

Well!—then they may be sent through Germany.

[*Exeunt on different sides.*]

## ACT III.

## SCENE I.

*The King's Bedchamber.*

*On the toilet two burning lights. In the back-ground several Pages asleep resting on their knees. The KING, in half undress, stands before the table, with one arm bent over*

*the chair, in a reflecting posture. Before him is a medallion and papers.*

KING.

Of a warm fancy she has ever been !  
Who can deny it ? I could never love her,  
Yet has she never seem'd to miss my love.  
And so 'tis plain—she's false !

*[Makes a movement which brings him to himself.—He looks round with surprise.]* Where have I been ?

Is no one watching here, then, save the King ?  
The light's burnt out, and yet it is not day.  
I must forego my slumbers for to-night.  
Take it, kind nature, for enjoy'd ! No time  
Have monarchs to retrieve the nights they lose.  
I'm now awake, and day it shall be.—

*[He puts out the candles, and draws aside the window-curtain. He observes the sleeping Pages—remains for some time standing before them—then rings a bell.]*

All

Asleep within the antechamber too ?

SCENE II.

*The KING, COUNT LERMA.*

LERMA *(surprised at seeing the KING)*.

Does not your Majesty feel well ?

KING.

The left

Pavilion of the palace was in flames :  
Did you not hear the alarum ?

LERMA.

No, my Liege.

KING.

No ! What ? And did I only dream it then ?  
'Twas surely real ! Does not the Queen sleep there ?

LERMA.

Yes, your Majesty.

KING.

This dream affrights me !

In future let the guards be doubled there  
As soon as it grows dark. Dost hear ? And yet  
Let it be done in secret.—I would not—  
Why do you gaze on me ?—

LERMA.

Your blood-shot eyes

I mark, that beg repose. Dare I remind  
 My Liege of an inestimable life,  
 And of your subjects, who with pale dismay,  
 Would in such features read of restless nights?  
 But two brief hours of morning sleep would——

KING (*with troubled look*).

Sleep!

Shall I find sleep within the Escorial :—  
 Let the King sleep, and he may lose his crown.  
 The husband, his wife's heart. But no! not so—  
 This is but slander. Was it not a woman  
 Whisper'd the crime to me? Woman, thy name  
 Is calumny!—The deed I'll hold unprov'd,  
 Until a man confirms the fatal truth!

*[To the Pages, who in the meanwhile have awaked.]*

Summon Duke Alva!

*[Pages go.]*

Count! come nearer to me.

*[Fixes a searching look on the COUNT.]*

Is all this true? O! for Omniscience now,  
 Tho' but so long as a man's pulse might beat!  
 Is it true? Upon your oath! Am I deceived?

LERMA.

My great, my best of Kings!

KING (*drawing back*).

King! Nought but King!

And King again! No better answer than  
 Mere hollow echo! When I strike this rock,  
 For water, to assuage my burning thirst,  
 It gives me molten gold.

LERMA.

What true, my Liege?

KING.

O! nothing—nothing! Leave me! Get thee gone!

*[The COUNT going, the KING calls him back again.]*

Say, are you married? and are you a father?

LERMA.

I am, your Majesty.

KING.

What! married—yet

You dare to watch a night here with your King!  
 Your hair is grey, and yet you do not blush  
 To think your wife is honest. Get thee home,  
 You'll find her lock'd, this moment, in your son's  
 Incestuous embrace. Believe your King.  
 Now go—you stand amazed—you stare at me  
 With searching eye, because of my grey hairs!  
 Unhappy man, reflect. Queens never taint  
 Their virtue thus:—doubt it, and you shall die!

LERMA (*with warmth*).

Who dare do so? In all my Monarch's realms  
 Who has the daring hardihood to breathe  
 Suspicion on her angel purity?  
 To slander thus, the best of Queens—

KING.

The best!

The best, from you too! She has ardent friends,  
 I find, around. It must have cost her much—  
 More than methinks she could afford to give.  
 You are dismiss'd—Now send the Duke to me.

LERMA.

I hear him in the antechamber.

[*Going.*]

KING (*with a milder tone*).

Count

What you observed is very true.—My head  
 Burns with the fever of this sleepless night:  
 What I have utter'd in this waking dream,  
 Mark you!—forget! I am your gracious King!

[*Presents his hand to kiss. Exit LERMA, opening the door at the same time to DUKE ALVA.*]

### SCENE III.

*The KING and DUKE ALVA.*

ALVA (*approaching the KING with an air of doubt*).  
 This unexpected order, at so strange  
 An hour! [*Starts on looking closer at the KING.*  
 And then those looks!

KING (*has seated himself, and taken hold of the medallion on the table—Looks at the DUKE for some time in silence.*  
 And is it true

I have no faithful servant!

ALVA.

How?

KING.

A blow

Aim'd at my life in its most vital part!

Full well 'twas known, yet no one warn'd me of it.

ALVA (*with a look of astonishment*).

A blow aim'd at your Majesty! and yet

Escape your Alva's eye?

KING (*showing him letters*).

Know you this writing?

ALVA.

It is the Prince's hand.

KING (*a pause—watches the DUKE closely*).

Do you suspect

Then nothing?—Often have you caution'd mè

'Gainst his ambition—Was there nothing more

Than his ambition should have made me tremble?

ALVA

Ambition is a word of largest import,

And much it may comprise.

KING.

And had you nought

Of special purport to disclose?

ALVA (*after a pause, mysteriously*).

Your Majesty

Hath given the kingdom's welfare to my charge:—

On this my inmost, secret thoughts are bent,

And my best vigilance. Beyond this charge

What I may think, suspect, or know, belongs

To me alone. These are the sacred treasures

Which not the vassal only, but the slave—

The very slave—~~may~~ from a king withhold.

Not all that to my mind seems plain, is yet

Mature enough to meet the Monarch's ear.

Would he be answered—then must I implore

He will not question as a King.

KING (*handing the letters*).

Read these!

ALVA (*reads them, and turns to the KING with a look of terror*).

Who was the madman placed these fatal papers  
In my King's hands ?

KING.

You know, then, who is meant ?

No name you see is mentioned in the paper.

ALVA (*stepping back confused*).

I was too hasty !

KING.

But you know !

ALVA (*after some consideration*).

"Tis spoken !

The King commands,—I dare not now conceal.

I'll not deny it—I *do* know the person.

KING (*starting up in violent emotion*)

God of Revenge ! inspire me to invent  
Some new, unheard-of torture ! Is their crime  
So clear, so plain, so public to the world,  
That without e'en the trouble of inquiry  
The veriest hint suffices to reveal it ?  
This is too much ! I did not dream of this !  
I am the last of all, then, to discern it—  
The last in all my realm ?

ALVA (*throwing himself at the KING's feet*).

Yes, I confess

My guilt, most gracious Monarch. I'm ashamed  
A coward prudence should have tied my tongue  
When truth, and justice, and my Sovereign's honour,  
Urged me to speak. But since all else are silent,  
And since the magic spell of beauty binds  
All other tongues,—I dare to give it voice ;  
Though well I know, a son's warm protestations,  
A wife's seductive charms and winning tears——

KING (*suddenly with warmth*).

Rise, Alva ! thou hast now my royal promise—

Rise, and speak fearlessly !

ALVA (*rising*).

Your Majesty,

Perchance, may bear in your remembrance still,  
What happen'd in the garden at Aranjuez.



You found the Queen deserted by her ladies,  
With looks confused—alone, within a bower,—

KING.

Proceed! What further have I yet to hear?—

ALVA.

'The Marchioness of Mondecar was banished  
Because she boldly sacrificed herself  
'To save the Queen! It has been since discovered,  
She did no more than she had been commanded.  
——Prince Carlos, had been there.

KING (*starting*).

'The Prince! What more?"

ALVA.

'Upon the ground, the footsteps of a man  
Were traced, till finally they disappeared  
Close to a grotto, leftward of the bower,  
Where lay a handkerchief, the Prince had dropped.  
'This waken'd our suspicions.—But besides,  
The gardener met the Prince upon the spot,—  
Just at the time, as near as we can guess,  
Your Majesty appeared within the walk.

KING (*recovering from gloomy thought*).

And yet she wept when I but seem'd to doubt!  
She made me blush before th' assembled court,  
Blush to my very self! By Heaven! I stood  
In presence of her virtue, like a culprit.

[*A long and deep silence.—He sits down and hides his face.*

Yes, Alva, you are right!—All this may lead  
To something dreadful—Leave me for a moment——

ALVA.

But, gracious sire, all this is not enough——

KING (*snatching up the papers*).

Nor this, nor this?—Nor all the harmony  
Of these most damning proofs? 'Tis clear as day—  
I knew it long ago—their heinous guilt  
Began, when first I took her from your hands,  
Here in Madrid. I think I see her now  
With look of horror, pale as midnight ghost,  
Fixing her eyes upon my hoary hair!  
'Twas then the treacherous game began!

ALVA.

The Prince,

In welcoming a mother—lost his bride !  
 Long had they nursed a mutual passion, long  
 Each others ardent feelings understood,  
 Which her new state forbade her to indulge.  
 'The fear which still attends love's first avowal  
 Was long subdued. Seduction, bolder grown,  
 Spoke in those forms of easy confidence  
 Which recollections of the past allowed.  
 Allied by harmony of souls and years,  
 And now by similar restraints provoked.  
 'They readily obey'd their wild desires.  
 Reasons of state opposed their early union—  
 But can it, sire, be thought she ever gave  
 To the State Council such authority ?  
 That she subdued the passion of her soul  
 To scrutinize with more attentive eye  
 Th' election of the cabinet. Her heart  
 Was bent on love, and won a diadem.

KING (*offended, and with bitterness*).

You are a nice observer, Duke, and I  
 Admire your eloquence. I thank you truly.

[*Rising coldly and haughtily.*]

But you are right. The Queen has deeply err'd,  
 In keeping from me letters of such import,  
 And in concealing the intrusive visit  
 'The Prince paid in the garden :—from a false  
 Mistaken honour she hath deeply erred,  
 And I shall question further.

[*Ringing the bell.*]

Who waits now

Within the antechamber ? You, Duke Alva,  
 I need no longer.—Go.

ALVA.

And has my zeal

A second time displeased your Majesty ?

KING (*to a PAGE who enters*).

Summon Domingo. Duke, I pardon you  
 For having made me tremble, for a moment,

With secret apprehension, lest yourself  
Might fall a victim to a foul misdeed.

[*Exit ALVA.*]

SCENE IV.

*The KING, DOMINGO.*

[*KING walks up and down the room to collect his thoughts.*  
DOMINGO (*after contemplating the KING for some time with a respectful silence*).

How joyfully surprised I am to find  
Your Majesty so tranquil and collected.

KING.

Surprised !

DOMINGO.

And Heav'n be thank'd my fears were groundless !  
Now may I hope the best.

KING.

Your fears ! What feared you ?

DOMINGO.

I dare not hide it from your Majesty  
That I have learn'd a secret——

KING (*gloomily*).

And have I

Express'd a wish to share your secret with you ?  
Who ventures to anticipate me thus ?—  
Too forward, by mine honour !

DOMINGO.

(*Gracious monarch !*

The place, the occasion, seal of secrecy  
'Neath which I learn'd it—free me from this charge.  
It was entrusted to me at the seat  
Of penitence—entrusted as a crime  
That deeply weigh'd upon the tender soul  
Of the fair sinner who confess'd her guilt,  
And sought the pardon of offended Heaven.  
Too late the Princess weeps a foul misdeed  
That may involve the Queen herself in ruin.

KING.

Indeed ! Kind soul !—You have correctly guess'd  
The occasion of your summons. You must guide me

Through this dark labyrinth wherein blind zeal  
Has tangled me. From you I hope for truth.  
Be candid with me ; what must I believe,  
And what determine ? From your sacred office  
I look for strictest truth.

DOMINGO.

And if, my liege,  
The mildness ever incident to this  
My holy calling, did not such restraint  
Impose upon me, still I would entreat  
Your Majesty, for your own peace of mind,  
To urge no farther this discovery,  
And cease for ever to pursue a secret  
Which never can be happily explain'd.  
All that is yet discover'd may be pardon'd.  
Let the King say the word—and then the Queen  
Has never sinn'd. The Monarch's will bestows  
Virtue and fortune, both with equal ease.  
And the King's undisturb'd tranquillity  
Is, in itself, sufficient to destroy  
The rumours set on foot by calumny.

KING.

What ! Rumours ! and of me ! among my subjects !

DOMINGO.

All falsehood sire ! Naught but the vilest falsehood !  
I'll swear 'tis false !—Yet what's believed by all,  
Groundless and unconfirm'd altho' it be,  
Works its effect, as sure as truth itself.

KING.

Not in this case, by Heaven !

DOMINGO.

A virtuous name  
Is, after all, my Liege, the only prize  
Which queens and peasants' wives contest together.

KING.

For which I surely have no need to tremble.

[*He looks doubtingly at DOMINGO.—After a pause.*  
Priest, thou hast something fearful to impart.  
Delay it not. I read it plainly stamp'd  
In thy ill-boding looks. Then out with it,

Whate'er it be. Let me no longer tremble  
Upon the rack. What do the people say?

DOMINGO.

The people, sire, are liable to err,  
Nay err assuredly. What people think  
Should not alarm the King. Yet that they should  
Presume so far as to indulge such thoughts——

KING.

Why must I beg this poisonous draught so long?

DOMINGO.

The people often muse upon that month  
Which brought your Majesty so near the grave.  
From that time, thirty weeks had scarce elapsed,  
Before the Queen's delivery was announced——

[*The KING rises and rings the bell. DUKE ALVA enters. DOMINGO alarmed*

I am amazed, your Majesty!

KING (*going towards ALVA*).

Toledo!

You are a man—defend me from this Priest!

DOMINGO (*he and DUKE ALVA exchange embarrassed looks.*—

*After a pause.*)

Could we have but foreseen that this occurrence  
Would be revenged upon its mere relater——

KING

Said you a bastard? I had scarce, you say,  
Escaped the pangs of death when first she felt  
She should, in nature's time, become a mother.  
Explain how this occurred! 'Twas then, if I  
Remember right, that you, in every church,  
Ordered devotions to St. Dominick,  
For the especial wonder he vouchsafed.—  
On one side or the other, then, you lie!—  
What would you have me credit? O, I see  
Full plainly through you now! If this dark plot  
Had then been ripe, your saint had lost his fame.

ALVA.

This plot?

KING.

How can you with a harmony

So unexampled, in your very thoughts  
Concur, and not have first conspired together ?  
Would you persuade me thus ? Think you that I  
Perceived not with what eagerness you pounced  
Upon your prey ? With what delight you fed  
Upon my pain,—my agony of grief ?  
Full well I mark'd the ardent, burning zeal  
With which the Duke forestall'd the mark of grace  
I destined for my son. And how this Priest  
Presumed to fortify his petty spleen  
With my wrath's giant arm ! I am, forsooth,  
A bow which each of you may bend at pleasure !  
But I have yet a will. And if I needs  
Must doubt—perhaps I may begin with you.

ALVA.

Reward like this, our truth did ne'er expect.

KING.

Your truth ! Truth warns of apprehended danger.  
'Tis malice that speaks only of the past.  
What can I gain by your officiousness ?  
Should your suspicious ripen to full truth,  
What follows but the pang of separation,  
The melancholy triumph of revenge ?  
But no : you only fear—you feed me with  
Conjectures vague. To hell's profound abyss  
You lead me on, then flee yourselves away

DOMINGO.

What other proofs than these are possible,  
When our own eyes can scarcely trust themselves ?

KING (*after a long pause, turning earnestly and solemnly  
towards DOMINGO*).

The grandees of the realm shall be convened,  
And I will sit in judgment. Then step forth  
In front of all, if you have courage for it,  
And charge her as a strumpet. She shall die—  
Die without mercy—and the Prince, too, with her !  
But mark me well : if she but clear herself.  
That doom shall fall on you. Now dare you show  
Honour to truth by such a sacrifice ?

Determine.—No, you dare not. You are silent,  
Such is the zeal of liars!

ALVA (*who has stood at a distance, answers coldly and calmly*).  
I will do it.

KING (*turns round with astonishment and looks at the DUKE for  
a long time without moving*).

That's boldly said! But thou hast risk'd thy life  
In stubborn conflicts for far less a prize.  
Hast risk'd it with a gamester's recklessness—  
For honour's empty bubble What is life  
To thee? I'll not expose the royal blood  
To such a madman's power, whose highest hope  
Must be, to yield his wretched being up  
With some renown. I spurn your offer. Go;  
And wait my orders in the audience chamber.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

*The KING alone.*

Now give me, gracious Providence! a man.  
Thou'st given me much already Now vouchsafe me  
A man! for thou alone canst grant the boon.  
Thine eye doth penetrate all hidden things.  
O! give me but a friend: for I am not  
Omniscient like to Thee. The ministers,  
Whom thou hast chosen for me, thou dost know—  
And their deserts: and as their merits claim,  
I value them. Their subjugated vices,  
Coerced by rein severe, serve all my ends,  
As thy storms purify this nether world.  
I thirst for truth.—To reach its tranquil spring,  
Through the dark heaps of thick surrounding error,  
Is not the lot of kings. Give me the man,  
So rarely found, of pure and open heart,  
Of judgment clear, and eye unprejudiced,  
To aid me in the search.—I cast the lots.  
And may I find that man, among the thousands  
Who flutter in the sunshine of a court.

[*He opens an escritoir and takes out a portfolio. After  
turning over the leaves a long time.*]

Nothing but names, mere names are here:—no note  
 E'en of the services to which they owe  
 Their place upon the roll! O what can be  
 Of shorter memory than gratitude?  
 Here, in this other list, I read each fault  
 Most accurately mark'd. That is not well!  
 Can vengeance stand in need of such a help?

*[He reads farther.]*

Count Egmont! What doth he here? Long ago  
 The victory of St. Quentin is forgotten.  
 I place him with the dead.

*[He effaces this name and writes it on the other roll;  
 after he has read farther.]*

The Marquis Posa!

The Marquis Posa!—I can scarce recall  
 This person to my mind. And doubly mark'd!  
 A proof I destined him for some great purpose.  
 How is it possible? This man, till now,  
 Has ever shunn'd my presence—still has fled  
 His royal debtor's eye? The only man,  
 By Heaven, within the compass of my realm,  
 Who does not court my favour. Did he burn  
 With avarice, or ambition, long ago  
 He had appear'd before my throne. I'll try  
 This wondrous man. He who can thus dispense  
 With royalty, will doubtless speak the truth.

## SCENE VI.

*The Audience Chamber.*

DON CARLOS *in conversation with the* PRINCE OF PARMA,  
 DUKES ALVA, FERIA, and MEDINA SIDONIA, COUNT LERMA,  
*and other Grandees, with papers in their hands, awaiting  
 the KING.*

MEDINA SIDONIA *(seems to be shunned by all the Grandees,  
 turns towards DUKE ALVA, who, alone and absorbed in  
 himself, walks up and down).*

Duke, you have had an audience of the King.  
 How did you find him minded?



ALVA.

Somewhat ill  
For you, and for the news you bring.

MEDINA SIDONIA.

My heart  
Was lighter 'mid the roar of English cannon,  
Than here on Spanish ground.

[CARLOS, who had regarded him with silent sympathy,  
now approaches him and presses his hand.

My warmest thanks.  
Prince, for this generous tear!—You may perceive  
How all avoid me. Now my fate is seal'd.

CARLOS.

Still hope the best both from my father's favour,  
And your own innocence.

MEDINA SIDONIA.

Prince! I have lost  
A fleet, more mighty than e'er ploughed the waves.  
And what is such a head as mine, to set  
'Gainst seventy sunken galleons? And therewith  
Five hopeful sons! Alas! that breaks my heart.

## SCENE VII.

*The KING enters from his Chamber, attired. The former all uncover and make room on both sides, while they form a semicircle round him.—Silence.*

KING (*rapidly surveying the whole circle*).

Be covered all.

[DON CARLOS and the PRINCE OF PARMA approach first  
and kiss the KING's hand: he turns with friendly  
mien to the latter, taking no notice of his son.

Your mother, nephew, fain  
Would be inform'd what favour you have won  
Here in Madrid.

PARMA.

That question let her ask  
When I have fought my maiden battle, Sire.

KING.

Be satisfied, your turn will come at last,  
When these old props decay.

[To the DUKE OF FERIA.  
What brings you here?

FERIA (*kneeling to the KING*).

The Master, Sire, of Calatrava's order  
This morning died. I here return his cross.

KING (*takes the order and looks round the whole circle*).  
And who is worthiest after him to wear it?

[*He beckons to DUKE ALVA, who approaches and bends on one knee. The KING hangs the order on his neck.*

You are my ablest General! Ne'er aspire  
To more, and, Duke, my favours shall not fail you.

[*He perceives the DUKE of MEDINA SIDONIA.*  
My Admiral!

MEDINA SIDONIA.

And here you see, great king,  
All that remains of the Armada's might,  
And of the flower of Spain.

KING (*after a pause*).

God rules above us!

I sent you to contend with men, and not  
With rocks and storms. You're welcome to Madrid.

[*Extending his hand to him to kiss.*

I thank you for preserving in yourself  
A faithful servant to me. For as such  
I value him, my Lords; and 'tis my will  
That you should honour him.

[*He motions him to rise and cover himself, then turns to the others.*

What more remains?

[To DON CARLOS and the PRINCE OF PARMA.  
Princes, I thank you!

[*They retire; the other Grandees approach, and kneeling, hand their papers to the KING. He looks over them rapidly, and hands them to DUKE ALVA.*

Duke! let these be laid

Before me in the Council. Who waits further?

[*No one answers*]

How comes it that amidst my train of nobles  
The Marquis Posa ne'er appears? I know  
This Marquis Posa served me with distinction.  
Does he still live? Why is he not among you?

LERMA.

The Chevalier is just return'd from travel,  
Completed through all Europe. He is now  
Hero in Madrid, and waits a public day  
To cast himself before his Sovereign's feet.

ALVA.

The Marquis Posa!—Right, he is the same  
Bold Knight of Malta, Sire, of whom renown  
Proclaims this gallant deed. Upon a summons  
Of the Grand Master, all the valiant knights  
Assembled in their Island, at that time  
Besieged by Soliman. This noble youth,  
Scarce numbering eighteen summers, straightway fled  
From Alcala, where he pursued his studies,  
And suddenly arrived at La Valette.  
“This Cross,” he said, “was bought for me; and now  
To prove I'm worthy of it.” He was one  
Of forty knights who held St. Elmo's Castle,  
At mid-day, 'gainst Piali, Uluciali,  
And Mustapha, and Hassem; the assault  
Being thrice repeated. When the Castle fell,  
And all the valiant knights were kill'd around him,  
He plunged into the ocean, and alone  
Reached La Valette in safety. Two months after,  
The foe deserts the island, and the knight  
Return'd to end his interrupted studies

FERIA.

It was the Marquis Posa, too, who crush'd  
The dread conspiracy in Catalonia;  
And by his mark'd activity, preserved  
That powerful Province to the Spanish Crown.

KING.

I am amazed! What sort of man is this,  
Who can deserve so highly, yet awake

No pang of envy in the breasts of three  
 Who speak his praise? The character he owns  
 Must be of noble stamp, indeed, or else  
 A very blank. I'm curious to behold  
 This wond'rous man.

[To DUKE ALVA.

Conduct him to the Council

When mass is over.

[Exit DUKE. The KING calls FERIA.

And do you preside

Here in my place.

[Exit.

FERIA.

The King is kind to-day.

MEDINA SIDONIA.

Call him a god! So he has proved to me!

FERIA.

You well deserve your fortune, Admiral!

You have my warmest wishes.

ONE OF THE GRANDEES.

Sir, and mine.

A SECOND.

And also mine!

A THIRD.

My heart exults with joy—

So excellent a General!

THE FIRST.

The King

Show'd you no kindness,—'twas your strict desert.

LERMA (to MEDINA SIDONIA, taking leave).

O, how two little words have made your fortune!

[Exeunt all.

### SCENE VIII.

*The KING's Cabinet.*

MARQUIS POSA, and DUKE ALVA.

MARQUIS (as he enters)

Does he want me?—What, me?—Impossible!

You must mistake the name What can he want

With me?

ALVA.

To know you.

MARQUIS.

Curiosity!

No more; and I regret the precious minutes  
That I must lose: time passes swiftly by.

ALVA.

I now commend you to your lucky stars.  
The King is in your hands. Employ this moment  
To your own best advantage; for, remember,  
If it is lost, you are alone to blame.

SCENE IX.

*The MARQUIS alone.*

MARQUIS.

Duke, 'tis well spoken! Turn to good account  
The moment which presents itself but once!—  
Truly this courtier reads a useful lesson:  
If not in his sense good, at least in mine.

*[Walks a few steps backwards and forwards.]*

How came I here? Is it caprice or chance  
That shows me now my image in this mirror?  
Why, out of millions, should it picture me—  
The most unlikely—and present my form  
To the King's memory?—Was this but chance?—  
Perhaps 'twas something more!—What else is chance  
But the rude stone which from the sculptor's hand  
Receives its life?—Chance comes from Providence,  
And man must mould it to his own designs.  
What the King wants with me but little matters;  
I know the business I shall have with him.  
Were but one spark of truth with boldness flung  
Into the despot's soul, how fruitful 'twere  
In the kind hand of Providence; and so  
What first appear'd capricious act of chance,  
May be design'd for some momentous end.  
Whate'er it be, I'll act on this belief.

*[He takes a few turns in the room, and stands at last in tranquil contemplation before a painting. The KING appears in the neighbouring room, where he gives some orders. He then enters and stands mo-*

*tionless at the door, and contemplates the MARQUIS for some time; without being observed.*

## SCENE X.

*The KING, and MARQUIS POSA.*

*[The MARQUIS, as soon as he observes the KING, comes forward and sinks on one knee; then rises and remains standing before him without any sign of confusion.*

KING (*looks at him with surprise*).

We've met before then?—

MARQUIS.

No.

KING.

You did my Crown

Some service? Why then do you shun my thanks?

My memory is throng'd with suitors' claims.

One only is Omniscient. 'Twas your duty

To seek your monarch's eye!—Why did you not?

MARQUIS.

Two days have scarce elapsed since my return

From foreign travel, Sire.

KING.

I would not stand

Indebted to a subject; ask some favour—

MARQUIS.

I enjoy the laws.

KING.

So does the murderer!

MARQUIS.

Then how much more the honest citizen!

My lot contents me, Sire.

KING (*aside*).

By heavens! a proud

And dauntless mind!—That was to be expected.

Proud I would have my Spaniards. Better far

The cup should overflow, than not be full.

They say you've left my service?

MARQUIS.

To make way  
For some one worthier, I withdrew.

KING.

'Tis pity.  
When spirits such as yours make holiday,  
The State must suffer. But perchance you fear'd  
To miss the post best suited to your merits.

MARQUIS.

O no! I doubt not the experienced judge,  
In human nature skill'd—his proper study,—  
Will have discover'd at a glance wherein  
I may be useful to him, wherein not.  
With deepest gratitude, I feel the favour  
Wherewith, by so exalted an opinion,  
Your Majesty is loading me: and yet—

[*He pauses.*]

KING.

You hesitate?

MARQUIS.

I am, I must confess,  
Sire, at this moment, unprepared to clothe  
My thoughts, as the world's citizen, in phrase  
Beseming to your subject. When I left  
The court for ever, Sire, I deem'd myself  
Released from the necessity to give  
My reasons for this step.

KING.

Are they so weak?  
What do you fear to risk by their disclosure?

MARQUIS.

My life at farthest, Sire,—were time allow'd  
For me to weary you—but this denied—  
Then truth itself must suffer. I must choose  
'Twixt your displeasure and contempt. And if  
I must decide, I rather would appear  
Worthy of punishment than pity.

KING (*with a look of expectation*).

Well?

MARQUIS.

I cannot be the servant of a prince.

[*The KING looks at him with astonishment.*]

I will not cheat the buyer. Should you deem  
Me worthy of your service, you prescribe  
A course of duty for me ; you command  
My arm in battle, and my head in council.  
Then, not my actions, but the applause they meet  
At court, becomes their object. But for me,  
Virtue possesses an intrinsic worth.  
I would, myself, create that happiness,  
A monarch, with my hand, would seek to plant ;  
And duty's task would prove an inward joy,  
And be my willing choice. Say, like you this ?  
And in your own creation, could you bear  
A new creator ? For I ne'er could stoop  
To be the chisel, where I fain would be  
The sculptor's self. I dearly love mankind,  
My gracious Liege, but in a monarchy,  
I dare not love another than myself.

KING.

This ardour is most laudable. You wish  
To do good deeds to others ; how you do them,  
Is but of small account to patriots,  
Or to the wise. Choose then within these realms  
The office, where you best may satisfy  
This noble impulse.

MARQUIS.

'Tis not to be found.

KING.

How !

MARQUIS.

What your Majesty would spread abroad,  
Through these my hands—is it the good of men ?  
Is it the happiness that my pure love  
Would to mankind impart ? Before such bliss  
Monarchs would tremble. No ! Court policy  
Has raised up new enjoyments for mankind,  
Which she is always rich enough to grant ;  
And waken'd, in the hearts of men, new wishes  
Which such enjoyments only can content.  
In her own mint, she coins the truth—such truth !—  
As she herself can tolerate : all forms



Unlike her own are broken. But is that  
Which can content the court, enough for me?  
Must my affection for my brother, pledge  
Itself to work my brother injury?  
To call him happy, when he dare not think?  
Sire choose not me, to spread the happiness  
Which you have stamp'd for us. I must decline  
To circulate such coin. I cannot be  
The servant of a prince.

KING (*suddenly*).

You are, perhaps,

A Protestant?

MARQUIS (*after some reflection*).

Our creeds, my liege, are one. [*A pause.*]

I am misunderstood. I fear'd as much.

You see the veil torn by my hand aside

From all the mysteries of Majesty.

Who can assure you I shall still regard

As sacred, that which ceases to alarm me?

I may seem dangerous, because I think

Above myself.—I am not so, my Liege;

My wishes lie corroding here. The rage

[*Laying his hand on his breast.*]

For innovation, which but serves t' increase

The heavy weight of chains it cannot break,

Shall never fire my blood! The world is yet

Unripe for my Ideal; and I live

A citizen of ages yet to come.

But does a fancied picture break your rest?

A breath of yours destroys it

KING.

Say am I

The first to whom your views are known?

MARQUIS.

You are.

KING (*rises, walks a few paces, and then stops opposite the*

MARQUIS—*aside*).

This tone, at least, is new; but flattery

Exhausts itself. And men of talent still

Disdain to imitate. So let us test

Its opposite for once. Why should I not?

There is a charm in novelty.—Should we  
Be so agreed, I will bethink me now  
Of some new State employment, in whose duties  
Your powerful mind——

MARQUIS.

Sire, I perceive how small,  
How mean, your notions are of manly worth.  
Suspecting, in an honest man's discourse,  
Nought but a flatterer's artifice,—methinks  
I can explain the cause of this your error.  
Mankind compel you to it With free choice  
They have disclaim'd their true nobility,  
Lower'd themselves to their degraded state.—  
Before man's inward worth, as from a phantom,  
They fly in terror,—and contented with  
Their poverty, they ornament their chains  
With slavish prudence; and they call it virtue,  
To bear them with a show of resignation.  
Thus did you find the world, and thus it was  
By your great father handed o'er to you.  
In this debased condition—how could you  
Respect mankind?

KING.

Your words contain some truth.

MARQUIS.

Alas! that when from the Creator's hand  
You took mankind, and moulded him to suit  
Your own ideas, making yourself the god  
Of this new creature, you should overlook  
That you yourself remained a human being—  
A very man, as from God's hands you came.—  
Still did you feel a mortal's wants and pains,  
You needed sympathy; but to a God  
One can but sacrifice, and pray, and tremble—  
Wretched exchange! Perversion most unblest  
Of sacred nature!—Once degrade mankind,  
And make him but a thing to play upon,  
Who then can share the harmony with you?

KING (*aside*).

By Heaven, he moves me!

MARQUIS.

But this sacrifice  
 To you is valueless. You thus become  
 A thing apart, a species of your own—  
 This is the price you pay for being a god !  
 'Twere dreadful were it not so, and if you  
 Gain'd nothing by the misery of millions !  
 And if the very freedom you destroy'd  
 Were the sole blessing, that could make you happy !  
 Dismiss me, Sire, I pray you ; for my theme  
 Bears me too far—my heart is full—too strong  
 The charm, to stand before the only man  
 To whom I may reveal it.

[*The COUNT LERMA enters, and whispers a few words to the KING, who signs him to withdraw, and continues sitting in his former posture.*]

KING (*to the MARQUIS, after LERMA is gone*)  
 Nay, continue.

MARQUIS (*after a pause*).

I feel, Sire—all the worth——

KING.

Proceed—you had

Yet more to say to me.

MARQUIS.

Your Majesty,  
 I lately pass'd through Flanders and Brabant,  
 So many rich and blooming provinces,  
 Fill'd with a valiant, great, and honest people !  
 To be the father of a race like this,  
 I thought must be divine indeed ! and then  
 I stumbled on a heap of burnt men's bones !

[*He stops, he fixes a penetrating look on the KING, who endeavours to return his glance ; but he looks on the ground embarrassed and confused.*]

True, you are forced to act so ; but that you  
 Could dare fulfil your task—this fills my soul  
 With shuddering horror ! O 'tis pity that  
 The Victim, weltering in his blood, must cease  
 To chant the praises of his sacrificer !

And that mere men—not beings loftier far—  
 Should write the history of the world. But soon  
 A milder age will follow that of Philip,  
 An age of truer wisdom :—hand in hand,  
 The subjects' welfare, and the Sovereign's greatness,  
 Will walk in union. Then the careful state  
 Will spare her children, and necessity  
 No longer glory to be thus inhuman.

KING.

When, think you, would that blessed age arrive,  
 If I had shrunk before the curse of this?  
 Behold my Spain, see here the burgher's good  
 Blooms in eternal and unclouded peace.  
 A peace like this will I bestow on Flanders.

MARQUIS (*hastily*).

The churchyard's peace! And do you hope to end  
 What you have now begun? Say, do you hope  
 To check the ripening change of Christendom,  
 The universal spring, that shall renew  
 The earth's fair form? Would you alone, in Europe,  
 Fling yourself down before the rapid wheel  
 Of destiny—which rolls its ceaseless course—  
 And seize its spokes with human arm. Vain thought!  
 Already thousands have your kingdom fled,  
 In joyful poverty: the honest burgher  
 For his faith exiled, was your noblest subject!  
 See, with a mother's arms, Elizabeth  
 Welcomes the fugitives, and Britain blooms  
 In rich luxuriance, from our country's arts.  
 Bereft of the new Christian's industry,  
 Grenada lies forsaken, and all Europe,  
 Exulting, sees its foe oppress'd with wounds,  
 By its own hands inflicted!

[*The KING is moved; the MARQUIS observes it, and advances a step nearer.*

You would plant  
 For all eternity—and yet the seeds  
 You sow around you are the seeds of death!  
 This hopeless task, with nature's laws at strife,  
 Will ne'er survive the spirit of its founder.  
 You labour for ingratitude:—in vain,

With nature you engage in desperate struggle—  
 In vain you waste your high and royal life,  
 In projects of destruction. Man is greater  
 Than you esteem him. He will burst the chains  
 Of a long slumber, and reclaim once more  
 His just and hallow'd rights. With Nero's name,  
 And fell Busiris', will he couple yours:  
 And—ah! you once deserved a better fate.

KING.

How know you that?

MARQUIS.

In very truth you did—

Yes, I repeat it—by the Almighty power!  
 Restore us all you have deprived us of,  
 And, generous as strong, let happiness  
 Flow from your 'orn of plenty—let man's mind  
 Ripen in your vast empire—give us back  
 All you have taken from us—and become,  
 Amidst a thousand kings, a king indeed!

*[He advances boldly, and fixes on him a look of earnestness and enthusiasm.]*

O! that the eloquence of all those myriads,  
 Whose fate depends on this momentous hour,  
 Could hover on my lips, and fan the spark  
 That lights thine eye into a glorious flame!  
 Renounce the mimicry of godlike powers  
 Which levels us to nothing. Be, in truth,  
 An image of the Deity himself!  
 Never did mortal man possess so much,  
 For purpose so divine. The kings of Europe  
 Pay homage to the name of Spain. Be you  
 The leader of these kings. One pen-stroke now,  
 One motion of your hand, can now create  
 The earth!—but grant us liberty of thought

*[Casts himself at his feet.]*

KING *(surprised, turns away his face, then again looks towards the MARQUIS).*

Enthusiast most strange! arise; but I——

MARQUIS.

Look round on all the glorious face of nature,  
 On freedom it is founded—see how rich,

Through freedom, it has grown. The great Creator  
 Bestows upon the worm its drop of dew,  
 And gives free-will a triumph, in abodes  
 Where lone corruption reigns. See *your* creation,  
 How small, how poor! The rustling of a leaf  
 Alarms the mighty lord of Christendom.  
 Each virtue makes you quake with fear. While he,  
 Not to disturb fair freedom's blest appearance,  
 Permits the frightful ravages of evil  
 To waste his fair domains. The great Creator,  
 We see not—he conceals himself within  
 His own eternal laws. The sceptic sees  
 Their operation, but beholds not Him.  
 "Wherefore a God!" he cries, "the world itself  
 Suffices for itself!" And Christian prayer  
 Ne'er praised him more, than doth this blasphemy.

KING.

And will you undertake to raise up this  
 Exalted standard of weak human nature  
 In my dominions?

MARQUIS.

You can do it, Sire!

Who else? Devote to your own people's bliss,  
 The kingly power, which has too long enrich'd  
 The greatness of the throne alone. Restore  
 The prostrate dignity of human nature,  
 And let the subject be, what once he was,  
 The end and object of the monarch's care,  
 Bound by no duty, save a brother's love.  
 And when mankind is to itself restored,  
 Roused to a sense of its own innate worth,  
 When freedom's lofty virtues proudly flourish—  
 Then, Sire, when ~~you~~ have made your own wide realms  
 The happiest in the world, it then may be  
 Your duty, to subdue the universe.

KING (*after a long pause*).

I've heard you to the end. Far differently  
 I find, than in the minds of other men,  
 The world exists in yours. And you shall not  
 By foreign laws be judged. I am the first  
 To whom you have your secret self disclosed;

I know it—so believe it—for the sake  
 Of this forbearance—that you have till now  
 Conceal'd these sentiments, although embraced  
 With so much ardour,—for this cautious prudence,  
 I will forget, young man, that I have learn'd them,  
 And how I learn'd them. Rise! I will confute  
 Your youthful dreams, by my matured experience,  
 Not by my power as king. Such is my will,  
 And therefore act I thus. Poison itself  
 May, in a worthy nature, be transform'd  
 To some benignant use.—But, Sir, beware  
 My Inquisition! 'Twould afflict me much—

MARQUIS.

Indeed!

KING (*lost in surprise*).

Ne'er met I such a man as this.'

No, Marquis, no! you wrong me! Not to you  
 Will I become a Nero—not to you!—  
 All happiness shall not be blasted round me,  
 And you at least, beneath my very eyes,  
 May dare continue to remain a man.

MARQUIS (*quickly*).

And, Sir! my fellow subjects? Not for me,  
 Nor my own cause, I pleaded. Sir! your subjects—

KING.

Nay, if you know so well how future times  
 Will judge me, let them learn at least from you,  
 That when I found a man, I could respect him.

MARQUIS.

O let not the most just of kings, at once  
 Be the most unjust! In your realm of Flanders,  
 There are a thousand better men than I.  
 But you—Sir! may I dare to say so much—  
 For the first time, perhaps, see liberty  
 In milder form portrayed.

KING (*with gentle severity*).

No more of this,  
 Young man! You would, I know, think otherwise  
 Had you but learn'd to understand mankind  
 As I.—But truly—I would not this meeting  
 Should prove our last.—How can I hope to win you?

MARQUIS.

Pray leave me as I am. What value, Sire,  
Should I be to you, were you to corrupt me?

KING.

This pride I will not bear. From this day forth  
I hold you in my service.—No remonstrance—  
For I will have it so. *[After a pause.]*

But how is this?

What would I now? Was it not truth I wish'd?  
But here is something more. Marquis, so far  
You've learn'd to know me as a King; but yet  
You know me not as man—

*[The MARQUIS seems to meditate.]*

I understand you—

Were I the most unfortunate of fathers,  
Yet as a husband may I not be blest?

MARQUIS.

If the possession of a hopeful son,  
And a most lovely spouse, confer a claim  
On mortal, to assume that title, Sire,  
In both respects, you are supremely blest.

KING *(with a serious look)*.

That am I not—and never, till this hour,  
Have I so deeply felt that I am not so.

*[Contemplating the MARQUIS with a look of melancholy.]*

MARQUIS.

The Prince possesses a right noble mind.  
I ne'er have known him otherwise.

KING.

I have!

The treasure he has robb'd me of, no crown  
Can e'er requite.—So virtuous a Queen!

MARQUIS.

Who dare assert it, Sire?

KING.

The world! and scandal!

And I myself! Here lie the damning proofs  
Of doubtless guilt—and others, too, exist,  
From which I fear the worst. But still 'tis hard  
To trust one proof alone.—Who brings the charge?



And O! if this were possible—that she,  
 The Queen, so foully could pollute her honour,  
 Then how much easier were it to believe  
 An Eboli may be a slanderer!  
 Does not that P'riest detest my son and her?  
 And can I doubt that Alva broods revenge?  
 My wife has higher worth than all together.

MARQUIS.

And there exists besides in woman's soul,  
 A treasure, Sire, beyond all outward show,  
 Above the reach of slander—female virtue!

KING.

Marquis! those thoughts are mine. It costs too much  
 To sink so low as they accuse the Queen.  
 The sacred ties of honour are not broken  
 With so much ease, as some would fain persuade me.  
 Marquis, you know mankind. Just such a man  
 As you I long have wish'd for—you are kind—  
 Cheerful—and deeply versed in human nature—  
 Therefore I've chosen you——

MARQUIS (*surprised and alarmed*).

Me, Sire!

KING.

You stand

Before your King and ask no special favour—  
 For yourself nothing!—that is new to me—  
 You will be just—ne'er weakly swayed by passion.  
 Watch my son close—search the Queen's inmost heart,  
 You shall have power to speak with her in private.  
 Retire. [*He rings a bell.*]

MARQUIS.

And if with but *one* hope fulfill'd  
 I now depart, then is this day indeed  
 The happiest of my life.

KING (*holds out his hand to him to kiss*).

I hold it not

Amongst my days a lost one.

[*The MARQUIS rises and goes.* COUNT LERMA *enters*

Count, in future,

The Marquis is to enter, unannounced.

## ACT IV.

## SCENE I.

*The Queen's Apartment.*

QUEEN, DUCHFESS OLIVAREZ, PRINCESS EBOLI, COUNTESS  
FUENTES.

QUEEN (*to the first Lady-as she rises*).

And so the key has not been found ! My casket  
Must be forced open then—and that at once.

[*She observes PRINCESS EBOLI, who approaches and  
kisses her hand.*

Welcome, dear Princess ! I rejoice to see you  
So near recover'd. But you still look pale.

FUENTES (*with malice*).

The fault of that vile fever which affects  
The nerves so painfully. Is't not, Princess ?

QUEEN.

I wish'd to visit you, dear Eboli,  
But dared not.

OLIVAREZ.

O ! the Princess Eboli  
Was not in want of company.

QUEEN.

Why that  
I readily believe, but what's the matter ?  
You tremble——

PRINCESS.

Nothing—nothing gracious Queen.  
Permit me to retire.

QUEEN.

You hide it from us—  
And are far worse than you would have us think.  
Standing must weary you. Assist her, Countess,  
And let her rest awhile upon that seat.

PRINCESS (*going*).

I shall be better in the open air.

QUEEN.

Attend her, Countess. What a sudden illness!

[A PAGE enters and speaks to the DUCHESS, who then addresses the QUEEN.]

OLIVAREZ.

The Marquis Posa waits, your Majesty,  
With orders from the King.

QUEEN.

Admit him then.

[PAGE admits the MARQUIS and exits.]

SCENE II.

MARQUIS POSA. *The former.*

*The MARQUIS falls on one knee before the QUEEN, who signs to him to rise.*

QUEEN.

What are my Lord's commands? And may I dare  
Thus publicly to hear——

MARQUIS.

My business is

In private with your royal Majesty.

[*The Ladies retire on a signal from the QUEEN.*]

SCENE III.

*The QUEEN, MARQUIS POSA.*QUEEN (*full of astonishment*).

How! Marquis, dare I trust my eyes? Are you  
Commission'd to me from the King?

MARQUIS.

Does this

Seem such a wonder to your Majesty?  
To me 'tis otherwise.

QUEEN.

The world must sure

Have wandered from its course! That you and he—  
I must confess——

MARQUIS.

It does sound somewhat strange—  
But be it so. The present times abound  
In prodigies.

QUEEN.

But none can equal this.

MARQUIS.

Suppose I had at last allow'd myself  
To be converted, and had weary grown  
Of playing the eccentric at the court  
Of Philip. The eccentric! What is that?  
He who would be of service to mankind,  
Must first endeavour to resemble them.  
What end is gain'd by the vain-glorious garb  
Of the sectarian? Then suppose—for who  
From vanity is so completely free  
As for his creed to seek no proselytes?—  
Suppose, I say, I had it in my mind  
To place my own opinions on the throne!

QUEEN.

No marquis! no! Not even in jest could I  
Suspect you of so wild a scheme as this—  
No visionary you!—to undertake  
What you can ne'er accomplish.

MARQUIS.

But that seems  
To be the very point at issue.

QUEEN.

What  
I chiefly blame you, Marquis, for, and what  
Could well estrange me from you—is—

MARQUIS.

Perhaps  
Duplicity!

QUEEN.

At least—a want of candour.  
Perhaps the King himself has no desire  
You should impart, what now you mean to tell me.

MARQUIS.

No.

QUEEN.

And can evil means be justified  
By honest ends? And—pardon me the doubt—  
Can your high bearing stoop to such an office?  
I scarce can think it.

MARQUIS.

Nor, indeed, could I,  
Were my sole purpose to deceive the King.  
'Tis not my wish—I mean to serve him now  
More honestly than he himself commands.

QUEEN.

'Tis spoken like yourself. Enough of this—  
What would the King?

MARQUIS.

The King? I can, it seems,  
Retaliate quickly on my rigid judge:  
And what I have deferr'd so long to tell,  
Your Majesty, perhaps, would willingly  
Longer defer to hear. But still it must  
Be heard. The King requests your Majesty  
Will grant no audience to the ambassador  
Of France to-day. Such were my high commands—  
'They're executed.

QUEEN.

Marquis, is that all  
You have to tell me from him?

MARQUIS.

Nearly all  
That justifies me thus to seek your presence.

QUEEN.

Well, Marquis, I'm contented not to hear  
What should, perhaps, remain a secret from me.

MARQUIS.

True, Queen! though were you other than yourself,  
I should inform you straight of certain things—  
Warn you of certain men—but this to you  
Were a vain office. Danger may arise  
And disappear around you, unperceived.  
You will not know it—of too little weight  
To chase the slumber from your angel brow.

But 'twas not this, in sooth, that brought me hither,  
Prince Carlos——

QUEEN.

What of him? How have you left him?

MARQUIS.

E'en as the only wise man of his time,  
In whom it is a crime to worship truth—  
And ready, for his love to risk his life,  
As the wise sage for his. I bring few words—  
But here he is himself.

[*Giving the QUEEN a letter.*

QUEEN (*after she had read it*).

He says he must

Speak with me—

MARQUIS.

So do I.

QUEEN.

And will he thus

Be happy—when he sees with his own eyes,  
That I am wretched?

MARQUIS.

No; but more resolved,

More active.

QUEEN.

How?

MARQUIS.

Duke Alva is appointed

To Flanders.

QUEEN.

Yes, appointed—so I hear.

MARQUIS.

The King cannot retract:—we know the King.  
This much is clear, the Prince must not remain  
Here in Madrid, nor Flanders be abandon'd.

QUEEN.

And can you hinder it?

MARQUIS.

Perhaps I can,

But then the means are dangerous as the evil—  
Rash as despair—and yet I know no other.

QUEEN.

Name them.

MARQUIS.

To you, and you alone, my Queen,  
Will I reveal them: for from you alone,  
Carlos will hear them named, without a shudder.  
The name they bear is somewhat harsh.

QUEEN.

Rebellion!

MARQUIS.

He must prove faithless to the King, and fly  
With secrecy to Brussels, where the Flemings  
Wait him with open arms. The Netherlands  
Will rise at his command. Our glorious cause  
From the King's son will gather matchless strength,  
The Spanish throne shall tremble at his arms,  
And what his sire denied him in Madrid,  
That will he willingly concede in Brussels.

QUEEN.

You've spoken with the King to-day—and yet  
Maintain all this.

MARQUIS.

Yes, I maintain it all,  
Because I spoke with him.

QUEEN (*after a pause*).

The daring plan  
Alarms and pleases me. You may be right—  
The thought is bold, and that perhaps enchants me.  
Let it but ripen. Does Prince Carlos know it?

MARQUIS.

It was my wish that he should hear it first  
From your own lips.

QUEEN.

The plan is doubtless good,  
But then the Prince's youth——

MARQUIS.

No disadvantage!

He there will find the bravest generals  
Of th' Emperor Charles—an Egmont and an Orange—  
In battle daring, and in council wise.

QUEEN (*with vivacity*).

True—the design is grand and beautiful!  
The Prince must act: I feel it sensibly.  
The part he's doom'd to play here in Madrid  
Has bow'd me to the dust, on his account.  
I promise him the aid of France and Savoy;  
I think with you, Lord Marquis—he must act—  
But this design needs money—

MARQUIS.

It is ready.

QUEEN.

I, too, know means.

MARQUIS.

May I then give him hopes

Of seeing you?

QUEEN.

I will consider it.

MARQUIS.

The Prince, my Queen, is urgent for an answer,  
I promised to procure it.

[*Presenting his writing tablet to the QUEEN.*

Two short lines

Will be enough.

QUEEN (*after she has written*).

When do we meet again?

MARQUIS.

Whene'er you wish.

QUEEN.

Whene'er I wish it, Marquis!

How can I understand this privilege?

MARQUIS.

As innocently, Queen, as e'er you may.  
But we enjoy it—that is sure enough.



QUEEN (*interrupting*).

How will my heart rejoice, should this become  
A refuge for the liberties of Europe,  
And this through *him*! Count on my silent aid!

MARQUIS (*with animation*).

Right well I knew your heart would understand me.

[*The DUCHESS OLIVAREZ enters.*]

QUEEN (*coldly to the MARQUIS*).

My Lord! the King's commands I shall respect  
As law. Assure him of the Queen's submission.

[*She makes a sign to him. Exit MARQUIS.*]

SCENE IV

*A Gallery.*

DON CARLOS, COUNT LERMA.

CARLOS.

Here we are undisturb'd. What would you now  
Impart to me?"

LERMA.

Your Highness had a friend  
Here at the Court.

CARLOS (*starting*).

A friend! I knew it not!  
But what's your meaning?"

LERMA.

I must sue for pardon  
That I am learn'd in more than I should know.  
But for your Highness' comfort, I've received it  
From one I may depend upon,—in short,  
I have it from *myself*.

CARLOS.

Whom speak you of?

LERMA.

The Marquis Posa.

CARLOS.

What!

LERMA.

And if your Highness  
Has trusted to him, more of what concerns you,  
Than every one should know, as I am led  
To fear—

CARLOS.

You fear!

LERMA.

He has been with the King.

CARLOS.

Indeed!

LERMA.

Two hours in secret converse too.

CARLOS.

Indeed!

LERMA.

The subject was no trifling matter.

CARLOS.

That I can well believe.

LERMA.

And several times

I heard your name.

CARLOS.

That's no bad sign, I hope.

LERMA.

And then, this morning, in the King's apartment,  
The Queen was spoken of mysteriously.

CARLOS (*starts back astonished*).

Count Lerma!

LERMA.

When the Marquis had retired,  
I was commanded to admit his lordship,  
In future, unannounced.

CARLOS.

Astonishing!

LERMA.

And without precedent, do I believe,  
Long as I've served the King—

CARLOS.

'Tis strange, indeed!

How did you say the Queen was spoken of?

LERMA (*steps back*).

No, no, my Prince!—that were against my duty.

CARLOS.

'Tis somewhat strange! One secret you impart,  
The other you withhold.

LERMA.

The first was due  
To you, the other to the King.

CARLOS

You're right.

LERMA.

And still I've thought you, Prince, a man of honour.

CARLOS.

Then you have judged me truly.

LERMA.

But all virtue

Is spotless till it's tried.

CARLOS.

Some stand the trial.

LERMA.

A powerful Monarch's favour is a prize  
Worth seeking for; and this alluring bait  
Has ruin'd many a virtue.

CARLOS.

Truly said!

LERMA.

And oftentimes 'tis prudent to discover  
What scarce can longer be conceal'd.

CARLOS.

Yes, prudent

It may be, but you say you've ever known  
The Marquis prove himself a man of honour

LERMA.

And if he be so still, my fears are harmless,  
And you become a double gainer, Prince. [Going.

CARLOS (*follows him with emotion, and presses his hand*).  
Treble I gain, upright and worthy man,  
I gain another friend, nor lose the one  
Whom I before possess'd. [Exit Lerma.

SCENE V.

MARQUIS POSA comes through the Gallery. CARLOS.

MARQUIS.

Carlos! My Carlos!

CARLOS.

Who calls me? Ah! 'tis thou—I was in haste  
To gain the convent! You will not delay.

[Going.]

MARQUIS.

Hold! for a moment.

CARLOS.

We may be observed

MARQUIS.

No chance of that. 'Tis over now. The Queen——

CARLOS.

You've seen my father.

MARQUIS.

Yes!—he sent for me.

CARLOS (*full of expectation*).

Well!

MARQUIS.

'Tis all settled—You may see the Queen.

CARLOS.

Yes! but the King! What said the King to you?

MARQUIS.

Not much. Mere curiosity to learn  
My history. The zeal of unknown friends—  
I know not what. He offered me employment.

CARLOS.

Which you, of course, rejected?

MARQUIS.

O well enough!

CARLOS.

How did you separate?

MARQUIS.

O well enough!

CARLOS.

And was I mentioned?

MARQUIS.

Yes; in general terms.

[*Taking out a pocket-book and giving it to the Prince.*]

See here are two lines written by the Queen,  
To-morrow I will settle where and how.

CARLOS (*reads it carelessly, puts the tablet in his pocket, and is going*).

You'll meet me at the Prior's?

MARQUIS.

Yes! But stay—

'Why in such haste? No one is coming hither.

CARLOS (*with a forced smile*).

Have we in truth changed characters? To-day

You seem so bold and confident.

MARQUIS.

To-day,—

Wherefore to-day?

CARLOS.

What writes the Queen to me?

MARQUIS.

Have you not read this instant?

CARLOS.

I? Oh yes.

MARQUIS.

What is't disturbs you now?

CARLOS (*reads the tablet again, delighted and fervently*).

Angel of Heaven!

I will be so,—I will be worthy of thee.

Love elevates great minds. So come what may,

Whatever thou commandest, I'll perform.

She writes that I must hold myself prepared

For a great enterprise! What can she mean?

Dost thou not know?

MARQUIS.

And, Carlos, if I knew,

Say, art thou now prepared to hear it from me?

CARLOS.

Have I offended thee? I was distracted—

Roderigo, pardon me.

MARQUIS.

Distracted! How?

CARLOS.

I scarcely know! But may I keep this tablet?

MARQUIS.

Not so! I came to ask thee for thine own.

CARLOS.

My tablet! Why?

MARQUIS.

And whatsoever writings  
You have, unfit to meet a stranger's eye—  
Letters or memorandums, and in short,  
Your whole portfolio.

CARLOS.  
Why?

MARQUIS.

That we may be  
Prepared for accidents. Who can prevent  
Surprise? They'll never seek them in my keeping.  
Here give them to me—

CARLOS (*uneasy*).  
Strange! What can it mean?

MARQUIS.

Be not alarmed! 'Tis nothing of importance!  
A mere precaution to prevent surprise.  
You need not be alarmed!

CARLOS (*gives him the portfolio*).  
Be careful of it.

MARQUIS.

Be sure I will.

CARLOS (*looks at him significantly*).  
I give thee much, Rodrigo!—

MARQUIS.

Not more than I have often had from thee.  
The rest we'll talk of yonder. Now farewell. [*Going.*]

CARLOS (*struggling with himself, then calls him back*).  
Give me my letters back—there's one amongst them  
The Queen addressed to me at Alcala,  
When I was sick to death. Still next my heart  
I carry it—to take this letter from me,  
Goes to my very soul. But leave me that,  
And take the rest.

[*He takes it out, and returns the portfolio.*]

MARQUIS.

I yield unwillingly—  
For 'twas that letter which I most requir'd.

CARLOS.

Farewell!

*[He goes away slowly, stops a moment at the door, turns back again, and brings him the letter,*

*You have it there.*

*[His hand trembles, tears start from his eyes, he falls on the neck of the MARQUIS, and presses his face to his bosom.*

O not my father  
Could do so much, Roderigo! Not my father!

*[Exit hastily.*

SCENE VI.

MARQUIS *(looks after him with astonishment).*

And is this possible! And to this hour  
Have I not known him fully? In his heart  
This blemish has escaped my eye. Distrust  
Of me—his friend! But no, 'tis calumny!  
What hath he done that I accuse him thus  
Of weakest weakness. I myself commit  
The fault I charge on him. What I have done  
Might well surprise him! When hath he displayed  
To his best friend such absolute reserve?  
Carlos, I must afflict thee—there's no help—  
And longer still distress thy noble soul.  
In me the King hath placed his confidence,  
His holiest trust reposed—as in a casket,  
And this reliance calls for gratitude.  
How can disclosure serve thee, when my silence  
Brings thee no harm—serves thee, perhaps? Ah! Why  
Point to the traveller the impending storm?  
Enough, if I direct it's anger past thee!—  
And when thou wak'st, the sky's again serene. *[Exit.*

SCENE VII.

*The KING's Cabinet.*

*The KING seated, near him the INFANTA CLARA EUGENIA.*

KING *(after a deep silence).*

No—she is sure my daughter—or can nature  
Thus lie like truth! Yes, that blue eye is mine!  
And I am pictured in thy ev'ry feature—

Child of my love! for such thou art—I fold thee  
Thus to my heart—thou art my blood— *[Starts and pauses.*

My blood—

What's worse to fear? Are not my features his?

*[Takes the miniature in his hand and looks first at the portrait, then at the mirror opposite, at last he throws it on the ground, rises hastily, and pushes the INFANTA from him.*

Away, away! I'm lost in this abyss.

### SCENE VIII.

COUNT LERMA and the KING

LERMA.

Her Majesty is in the antechamber

KING

What! Now?

LERMA.

And begs the favour of an audience.

KING.

Now! At this unaccustomed hour! Not now—  
I cannot see her yet.

LERMA.

Here comes the Queen.

*[Exit LERMA.*

### SCENE IX.

*The KING, the QUEEN enters, and the INFANTA.*

*[The INFANTA runs to meet the QUEEN and clings to her; the QUEEN falls at the KING'S feet, who is silent, and appears confused and embarrassed.*

QUEEN.

My Lord! My husband! I'm constrained to seek  
Justice before the throne!

KING.

What! Justice!

QUEEN.

Yes!

I'm treated with dishonour at the Court!  
My casket has been rifled.

KING.

What! Your casket?



QUEEN.

And things I highly value have been plunder'd.

KING.

Things that you highly value ?

QUEEN.

From the meaning  
Which ignorant men's officiousness, perhaps,  
Might give to them——

KING.

What's this ? Officiousness,  
And meaning ! How ? But rise.

QUEEN.

Oh no, my husband !  
Not till you bind yourself, by sacred promise,  
By virtue of your own authority,  
To find th' offender out, and grant redress,  
Or else dismiss my suite, which hides a thief.

KING.

But rise !—In such a posture !—Pray you rise.

QUEEN (*rises*).

'Tis some one of distinction—I know well ;  
My casket held both diamonds and pearls  
Of matchless value, but he only took  
My letters.

KING.

May I ask——

QUEEN.

Undoubtedly,  
My husband. They were letters from the Prince :  
His miniature as well.

KING.

From whom ?

QUEEN.

Your son. The Prince,

KING.

To you ?

QUEEN.

Sent by the Prince to me.

KING.

What ! From Prince Carlos ! Do you tell me that ?

QUEEN.

Why not tell you, my husband?

KING.

And not blush?

QUEEN

What mean you? You must surely recollect  
The letters, Carlos sent me to St. Germain's,  
With both Courts' full consent. Whether that leave  
Extended to the portrait, or alone  
His hasty hope dictated such a step,  
I cannot now pretend to answer: but  
If even rash, it may at least be pardon'd  
For thus much I may be his pledge—that then  
He never thought the gift was for his mother.

[*Observes the agitation of the KING.*

What moves you? What's the matter?

INFANTA (*who has found the miniature on the ground, and  
has been playing with it, brings it to the QUEEN*).

Look, dear mother!

See what a pretty picture!

QUEEN.

What then my——

[*She recognises the miniature, and remains in speechless  
astonishment. They both gaze at each other.—After a  
long pause:*

In truth, this mode of trying a wife's heart  
Is great and royal, Sir! But I should wish  
To ask one question?

KING.

'Tis for me to question

QUEEN.

Let my suspicions spare the innocent,  
And if by your command, this theft was done—

KING.

It was so done!

QUEEN.

Then I have none to blame,  
And none to pity—other than yourself—  
Since you possess a wife, on whom such schemes  
Are thrown away.

KING.

This language is not new—  
Nor shall you, Madam, now again deceive me  
As in the gardens of Aranjuez—  
My Queen of angel-purity, who then  
So haughtily my accusation spurn'd—  
I know her better now.

QUEEN.

What mean you, Sire?

KING.

Madam! thus briefly and without reserve—  
Say is it true?—still true, that you conversed  
With no one there? Is really that the truth?

QUEEN.

I spoke there with the Prince.

KING.

Then is it clear  
As day! So daring!—heedless of mine honour!

QUEEN.

Your honour, Sire! If that be now the question,  
A greater honour is, methinks, at stake  
Than Castille ever brought me as a dowry.

KING.

Why did you then deny the Prince's presence?

QUEEN.

Because I'm not accustomed to be question'd  
Like a delinquent, before all your courtiers;  
I never shall deny the truth, when ask'd  
With kindness and respect. Was that the tone  
Your Majesty used towards me in Aranjuez?  
Are your assembled grandees the tribunal  
Queens must account to, for their private conduct?  
I gave the Prince the interview he sought  
With earnest prayer, because, my liege and lord,  
I—the Queen—wish'd and will'd it, and because  
I never can admit, that formal custom  
Should sit as judge on actions that are guiltless:  
And I conceal'd it from your Majesty,  
Because I chose not to contend with you,  
About this right, in presence of your courtiers.

KING.

You speak with boldness, Madam !

QUEEN.

I may add,  
Because the Prince, in his own father's heart,  
Scarce finds that kindness, he so well deserves.

KING.

So well deserves !

QUEEN.

Why, Sire ! should I conceal it ?  
Highly do I esteem him—yes ! and love him  
As a most dear relation, who was once  
Deem'd worthy of a dearer—tenderer—title.  
I've yet to learn, that he, on this account,  
Should be estrang'd from me, beyond all others,—  
Because he once was better loved than they.  
Though your state policy may knit together  
What bands it pleases—'tis a harder task  
To burst such ties ! I will not hate another  
For any one's command—and since I must  
So speak—such dictates I will not endure.

KING.

Elizabeth ! you've seen me in weak moments—  
And their remembrance now emboldens you.  
On that strong influence you now depend,  
Which you have often, with so much success,  
Against my firmness tried. But fear the more !  
The power which has seduced me to be weak,  
May yet inflame me to some act of madness.

QUEEN.

What have I done ?

KING (*takes her hand*).

If it should prove but so—  
And is it not already ? If the full  
Accumulated measure of your guilt  
Become but one breath heavier—should I be  
Deceived— [*Lets her hand go.*]  
I can subdue these last remains  
Of weakness—can and will—then woe betide  
Myself and you, Elizabeth !

QUEEN.

What crime

Have I committed?

KING.

On my own account then

Shall blood be shed.

QUEEN.

And has it come to this?

O Heaven!

KING.

I shall forget myself—I shall

Regard no usage and no voice of nature—

Not even the law of nations.

QUEEN.

O how much

I pity you!

KING.

The pity of a harlot!

INFANTA (*clinging to her mother in terror*).

The King is angry and my mother weeps.

[KING pushes the child violently from the QUEEN.

QUEEN (*with mildness and dignity, but with faltering voice*).

This child I must protect from cruelty—

Come with me, daughter.

[Takes her in her arms.

If the King no more

Acknowledge thee—beyond the Pyrenees

I'll call protectors to defend our cause.

[Going.

KING (*embarrassed*).

Queen!

QUEEN.

I can bear no more—it is too much!

*Hastening to the door, she falls with her child on the threshold.*KING (*running to her assistance*).

Heavens! What is that?

INFANTA (*cries out with terror*).

She bleeds! My mother bleeds!

[Runs' out.

KING (*anxiously assisting her*).

O, what a fearful accident! You bleed;

Do I deserve this cruel punishment?  
Rise and collect yourself— Rise, they are coming!  
They will surprise us!—Shall the assembled court  
Divert themselves with such a spectacle?  
Must I entreat you?—Rise!

*[She rises, supported by the KING.]*

SCENE X.

*The former, ALVA, DOMINGO entering alarmed, Ladies follow.*

KING.

Now let the Queen  
Be led to her apartment; she's unwell.

*[Exit the QUEEN, attended by her ladies. ALVA and  
DOMINGO come forward.]*

ALVA.

The Queen in tears, and blood upon her face!

KING.

Does that surprise the devils who've misled me?

ALVA and DOMINGO.

We?

KING.

You, who have said enough to drive me mad,  
But nothing to convince me.

ALVA.

We gave you  
What we ourselves possessed.

KING.

May Hell reward you!  
I've done what I repent of! Ah! was hers  
The language of a conscience dark with guilt?

MARQUIS POSA (*from without*)

Say, can I see the King?

SCENE XI.

*The former, MARQUIS POSA.*

KING (*starts up at the sound of his voice, and advances some  
paces to meet him*)

Ah! here he comes.—

Right welcome, Marquis ! Duke ! I need you now  
No longer. Leave us.

[ALVA and DOMINGO look at each other with silent astonishment and retire.]

## SCENE XII.

*The KING, and MARQUIS POSA.*

MARQUIS.

That old soldier, Sire,  
Who has faced death, in twenty battles, for you,  
Must hold it thankless to be so dismiss'd.

KING.

'Tis thus for you to think—for me to act ;  
In a few hours, you have been more to me,  
Than that man, in a life-time. Nor shall I.  
Keep my content a secret. On your brow  
The lustre of my high and royal favour  
Shall shine resplendent—I will make that man  
A mark for envy, whom I choose my friend.

MARQUIS.

What if the veil of dark obscurity  
Were his sole claim to merit such a title ?

KING.

What come you now to tell me ?

MARQUIS.

As I pass'd

Along the antechamber, a dread rumour  
Fell on my ear,—it seemed incredible,—  
Of a most angry quarrel—blood—the Queen——

KING.

Come you from her ?

MARQUIS.

I should be horrified  
Were not the rumour false : or should perhaps  
Your Majesty meantime have done some act—  
Discoveries of importance I have made,  
Which wholly change the aspect of affairs.

KING.

How, now ?

MARQUIS.

I found an opportunity  
To seize your son's portfolio, with his letters,  
Which, as I hope, may throw some light—

*[He gives the PRINCE'S portfolio to the KING.  
KING (looks through it eagerly).]*

A letter  
From the Emperor, my father. How! a letter  
Of which I ne'er remember to have heard.

*[He reads it through, puts it aside, and goes to the  
other papers]*

A drawing of some fortress—detach'd thoughts  
From Tacitus—and what is here? The hand  
I surely recognise—it is a lady's.

*[He reads it attentively, partly to himself, and partly  
aloud.]*

"This key—the farthest chamber of the Queen's  
Pavilion!"—Ha! what's this?—"The voice of love,—  
The timid lover—may—a rich reward."—  
Satanic treachery! I see it now.  
'Tis she—'tis her own writing!

MARQUIS.

The Queen's writing!

Impossible!—

KING.

The Princess Eboli's.

MARQUIS.

Then, it was true, what the Queen's page confess'd,  
Not long since—that he brought this key and letter.

KING *(grasping the MARQUIS'S hand in great emotion)*.

Marquis! I see that I'm in dreadful hands.  
This woman—I confess it—'twas this woman  
Forced the Queen's casket; and my first suspicions  
Were breathed by her. Who knows how deep the priest  
May be engaged in this? I am deceived  
By cursed villany.

MARQUIS.

Then was it lucky—

KING.

Marquis! O Marquis! I begin to fear  
I've wrong'd my wife.



MARQUIS.

If there exist, between  
The Prince and Queen, some secret understandings,  
They are of other import, rest assured,  
Than those they charge her with. I know, for certain,  
The Prince's prayer to be dispatched to Flanders,  
Was by the Queen suggested.

KING.

I have thought so.

MARQUIS.

The Queen's ambitions. Dare I speak more fully?  
She sees, with some resentment, her high hopes  
All disappointed, and herself shut out  
From share of empire. Your son's youthful ardour  
Offers itself to her far-reaching views  
Her heart!—I doubt if she can love.

KING.

Her schemes

Of policy can never make me tremble.

MARQUIS.

Whether the Infant loves her,—whether we  
Have something worse to fear from him,—are things  
Worthy our deep attention. To these points  
Our strictest vigilance must be directed.

KING.

You must be pledge for him.

MARQUIS.

And if the King

Esteem me capable of such a task,  
I must entreat it be entrusted to me  
Wholly without conditions.

KING.

So it shall.

MARQUIS.

That in the steps which I may think required,  
I may be thwarted by no coadjutors,  
Whatever name they bear.

KING.

I pledge my word

You shall not. You have proved my guardian angel.  
How many thanks I owe you for this service!

[*LERMA enters—the KING to him.*]

How did you leave the Queen?

LERMA.

But scarce recover'd

From her deep swoon

[*He looks at the MARQUIS doubtfully, and exit.*]

MARQUIS (*to the KING, after a pause*)

One caution yet seems needful.

The Prince may be advised of our design,  
For he has many faithful friends in Ghent,  
And may have partizans among the rebels.  
Fear may incite to desperate resolves;  
Therefore I counsel, that some speedy means  
Be taken, to prevent this fatal chance

KING.

You are quite right—but how?

MARQUIS.

Your Majesty

May sign a secret warrant of arrest,  
And place it in my hands, to be employed,  
As may seem needful, in the hour of danger.

[*The KING appears thoughtful*]

This step must be a most profound state-secret  
Until——

KING (*going to his desk and writing the warrant of arrest*).

The kingdom is at stake, and now  
The pressing danger sanctions urgent measures.  
Here Marquis! I need scarcely say—use prudence.

MARQUIS (*taking the warrant*).

'Tis only for the last extremity.

KING (*laying his hand on the shoulder of the MARQUIS*).

Go! Go, dear Marquis! Give this bosom peace,  
And bring back slumber to my sleepless pillow.

[*Exeunt at different sides.*]

## SCENE XIII.

*A Gallery.*

CARLOS *entering in extreme agitation*, COUNT LERMA *meeting him*,

CARLOS.

I have been seeking you.

LERMA.

And I, your Highness.

CARLOS.

For heaven's sake is it true?

LERMA.

What do you mean?

CARLOS.

That the King drew his dagger—and that she  
Was borne, all bathed in blood, from the apartment?  
Now answer me, by all that's sacred—say  
What am I to believe? What truth is in it?

LERMA.

She fainted, and so grazed her skin in falling:  
That is the whole.

CARLOS.

Is there no further danger?

Count! answer on your honour.

LERMA.

For the Queen

No farther danger—for yourself there's much!

CARLOS.

None for my mother! Then kind Heaven I thank thee.  
A dreadful rumour reached me, that the King  
Raved against child and mother, and that some  
Dire secret was discover'd.

LERMA.

And the last

May possibly be true.

CARLOS.

Be true! What mean you?

LERMA.

One warning have I given you, Prince, already,

And that to-day.—but you despised it,—now  
Perhaps you'll profit better by a second.

CARLOS.

Explain yourself.

LERMA

If I mistake not. Prince,  
A few days since, I noticed in your hands  
An azure-blue portfolio, work'd in velvet  
And chased with gold.

CARLOS (*with anxiety*).

Yes! I had such a one.

LERMA.

And on the cover—if I recollect—  
A portrait set in pearls?

CARLOS.

'Tis right—go on.

LERMA.

I enter'd the King's chamber on a sudden,  
And in his hands I mark'd that same portfolio,  
The Marquis Posa standing by his side.

CARLOS (*after a short silence of astonishment, hastily*).  
'Tis false!

LERMA (*warmly*).

Then I'm a traitor!

CARLOS (*looking steadfastly at him*).

That you are!

LERMA.

Well! I forgive you.

CARLOS (*paces the apartment in extreme agitation, at length  
stands still before him*).

Has he injured thee?

What have our guiltless ties of friendship done,  
That with a demon's zeal thou triest to rend them?

LERMA.

Prince! I respect the grief which renders you  
So far unjust.

CARLOS.

Heav'n shield me from suspicion!

ISERMA.

And I remember, too, the King's own words.  
Just as I enter'd, he address'd the Marquis :  
"How many thanks I owe you for this news."

CARLOS.

O say no more !

ISERMA.

Duke Alva is disgraced !  
The great seal taken from the Prince Ruy Gomez,  
And given to the Marquis.

CARLOS (*lost in deep thought*).

And from me

Has he conceal'd all thi—" And why from me ?

ISERMA.

As minister all-powerful, the court  
Looks on him now—as favourite unrivall'd !

CARLOS

He lov'd me—lov'd me greatly : I was dear,  
As his own soul is to him. 'That I know—  
Of that I've had a thousand proofs. But should  
The happiness of millions yield to one ?  
Must not his country dearer to him prove  
'Than Carlos ? One friend only is too few  
For his capacious heart. And not enough  
Is Carlos' happiness to engross his love.  
He offers me a sacrifice to virtue ;  
And shall I mourn at him ? Now 'tis certain,  
I have for ever lost him.

[*He steps aside and covers his face.*

ISERMA.

Dearest Prince !

How can I serve you ?

CARLOS (*without looking at him*).

Get you to the King ;

Go and betray me. I have nought to give.

ISERMA.

Will you then stay and brave the ill that follows ?

CARLOS (*leans on a balustrade and looks forward with a vacant gaze*).

I've lost him now, and I am destitute !

LERMA (*approaching him with sympathizing emotion*).  
And will you not consult your safety, Prince?

CARLOS.

My safety! Generous man!

LERMA.

And is there, then,  
No other person you should tremble for?

CARLOS (*starts up*).

Heavens! you remind me now. Alas! My mother!  
The letter that I gave him—first refused—  
Then after gave him!

[*He paces backwards and forwards with agitation, wringing his hands.*

Has she then deserved  
This blow from him? He should have spared her, Lerma.  
[*In a hasty determined tone.*

But I must see her—warn her of her danger—  
I must prepare her—Lerma, dearest Lerma!  
Whom shall I send? Have I no friend remaining?  
Yes! Heaven be praised! I still have one; and now  
The worst is over. [*Erit quickly.*

LERMA (*follows, and calls after him*).

Whither, whither, Prince?

#### SCENE XIV.

THE QUEEN, ALVA, DOMINGO.

ALVA.

If we may be permitted, gracious Queen—

QUEEN.

What are your wishes?

DOMINGO.

A most true regard  
For your high Majesty, forbids us now  
To watch in careless silence, an event  
Pregnant with danger to your royal safety.

ALVA.

We hasten, by a kind and timely warning,  
To counteract a plot that's laid against you.

DOMINGO.

And our warm zeal, and our best services,  
To lay before your feet, most gracious Queen!

QUEEN (*looking at them with astonishment*).

Most reverend Sir, and you, my noble Duke,  
You much surprise me. Such sincere attachment,  
In truth, I had not hoped for from Domingo,  
Nor from Duke Alva.—Much I value it.  
A plot you mention, menacing my safety—  
Dare I inquire by whom——

ALVA.

We must entreat  
You will beware a certain Marquis Posa.  
He has, of late, been secretly employ'd  
In the King's service.

QUEEN.

With delight I hear  
The King has made so excellent a choice.  
Report, long since, has spoken of the Marquis,  
As a deserving, great, and virtuous man—  
'The royal grace was ne'er so well bestow'd!

DOMINGO.

So well bestowed! We think far otherwise.

ALVA.

It is no secret now, for what designs  
This man has been employ'd.

QUEEN.

How! What designs?  
You put my expectation on the rack.

DOMINGO.

How long is it, since last your Majesty  
Open'd your casket?

QUEEN.

Why do you inquire?

DOMINGO.

Did you not miss some articles of value?

QUEEN.

Why these suspicions? What I missed, was then  
Known to the court! But what of Marquis Posa?  
Say, what connection has all this with him?

ALVA.

The closest, please your Majesty—the Prince  
 Has also lost some papers of importance ;  
 And they were seen, this morning, with the King,  
 After the Marquis had an audience of him.

QUEEN (*after some consideration*).

This news is strange indeed—inexplicable—  
 To find a foe, where I could ne'er have dream'd it,  
 And two warm friends, I knew not I possess'd !  
   [*Fixing her eyes stedfastly upon them.*]  
 And, to speak truth, I had well nigh imputed  
 To you, the wicked turn my husband served me.

ALVA.

To us !

QUEEN.

To you yourselves !

DOMINGO.

To us ! Duke Alva !

QUEEN (*her eyes still fastened on them*).

I am glad to be, so timely, made aware  
 Of my rash judgment,—else had I resolved  
 This very day, to beg his Majesty  
 Would bring me, face to face, with my accusers.  
 But I'm contented now. I can appeal  
 To the Duke Alva, for his testimony.

ALVA.

For mine ? You would not sure do that !

QUEEN.

Why not ?

ALVA.

'Twould counteract the services we might  
 Render, in secret, to you.

QUEEN.

How ! in secret ?

[*With stern dignity.*]

I fain would know what secret projects, Duke,  
 Your Sovereign's spouse can have to form with you,  
 Or, Priest ! with you—her husband should not know ?  
 Think you that I am innocent, or guilty ?

DOMINGO.

Strange question !



ALVA.

Should the Monarch prove unjust—

And, at this time——

QUEEN.

Then I must wait for justice

Until it come—and they are happiest far

Whose consciences may calmly wait their right.

[*Bows to them and exit.* DOMINGO and ALVA *exit*  
*on the opposite side.*]

SCENE XV.

*Chamber of PRINCESS EBOLI.*

PRINCESS EBOLI. CARLOS *immediately after.*

EBOLI.

I it then true—the strange intelligence,  
That fills the Court with wonder?

CARLOS (*enters*).

Do not fear,

Princess! I shall be gentle as a child.

EBOLI.

Prince, this intrusion!

CARLOS.

Are you angry still?

Offended still with me——

EBOLI.

Prince!

CARLOS (*earnestly*).

Are you angry?

I pray you answer me.

EBOLI.

What can this mean?

You seem, Prince, to forget—what would you with me?

CARLOS (*seizing her hand with warmth*).

Dear maiden! Can you hate eternally?

Can injured love ne'er pardon?

EBOLI (*disengaging herself*).

Prince! of what

Would you remind me?

CARLOS.

Of your kindness, dearest!  
And of my deep ingratitude. Alas,  
Too well I know it! deeply have I wronged thee—  
Wounded thy tender heart, and from thine eyes,  
Thine angel eyes, wrung precious tears, sweet maid!  
But ah! 'tis not repentance leads me hither.

I BOLI.

Prince! leave me—I—

CARLOS.

I come to thee, because  
Thou art a maid of gentle soul—because  
I trust thy heart—thy kind and tender heart.  
Think, dearest maiden! think I have no friend,  
No friend but thee, in all this wretched world—  
Thou who wert once so kind, wilt not for ever  
Hate me, nor will thine anger prove eternal.

FBOI I (*turning away her face*).

O, cease! No more! For Heaven's sake! leave me, Prince

CARLOS.

Let me remind thee of those golden hours—  
Let me remind thee of thy love, sweet maid—  
That love which I so basely have offended!  
O let me now appear to thee again  
As once I was—and as thy heart portrayed me.  
Yet once again, once only place my image,  
As in days past, before thy tender soul,  
And to that idol, make a sacrifice,  
Thou canst not make to me.

I BOLI.

O, Carlos, cease!

Too cruelly thou sportest with my feelings!

CARLOS.

Be nobler than thy sex! Forgive an insult!  
Do what no woman e'er has done before thee,  
And what no woman, after thee, can equal.  
I ask of thee an unexampled favour.  
Grant me—upon my knees I ask it of thee—  
Grant me two moments with the Queen, my mother!

*[He casts himself at her feet.]*

## SCENE XVI.

*The former.* MARQUIS POSA *rushes in: behind him two Officers of the Queen's Guard.*

MARQUIS (*breathless and agitated, rushing between CARLOS and the PRINCESS*).

Say, what has he confess'd? Believe him not!

CARLOS (*still on his knees, with loud voice*).

By all that's holy——

MARQUIS (*interrupting him with vehemence*).

He is mad! He raves!

O listen to him not!

CARLOS (*louder and more urgent*).

It is a question

Of life and death, conduct me to her straight.

MARQUIS (*dragging the PRINCESS from him by force*).

You die, if you but listen.

[*To one of the Officers, showing an order.*

Count of Cordova!

In the King's name, Prince Carlos is your prisoner.

[CARLOS stands bewildered. The PRINCESS utters a cry of horror, and tries to escape. The Officers are astounded.

—A long and deep pause ensues. The MARQUIS trembles violently, and with difficulty preserves his composure.

[*To the Prince.*

I beg your sword.—The Princess Ebloli

Remains——

[*To the Officers.*

And you, on peril of your lives,

Let no one with his Highness speak—no person—

Not e'en yourselves.

[*He whispers a few words to one Officer, then turns to the other.*

I hasten, instantly,

To cast myself before our Monarch's feet,

And justify this step——

[*To the Prince.*

And Prince! for you——

Expect me in an hour.

[CARLOS permits himself to be led away without any signs of consciousness, except that, in passing, he casts a

*languid, dying look, on the MARQUIS. The PRINCESS endeavours again to escape: the MARQUIS pulls her back by the arm.*

## SCENE XVII.

PRINCESS EBOLI, MARQUIS POSA.

EBOLI

For Heaven's sake let me leave this place—

MARQUIS (*leads her forward with dreadful earnestness*).

Thou wretch!

What has he said to thee?

EBOLI.

O leave me! Nothing!

MARQUIS (*with earnestness: holding her back by force*).

How much has he imparted to thee? Here

No way is left thee to escape To none,

In this world, shalt thou ever tell it.

EBOLI (*looking at him with terror*).

Heavens!

What would you do? Would you then murder me?

MARQUIS (*drawing a dagger*).

Yes! that is my resolve. Be speedy!

EBOLI.

Mercy!

What have I then committed?

MARQUIS (*looking towards heaven, points the dagger to her breast*).

Still there's time—

The poison has not issued from these lips.

Dash but the bowl to atoms, all remains

Still as before! The destinies of Spain

Against a woman's life!

[*Remains doubtingly in this position*EBOLI (*having sunk down beside him, looks in his face*).

Do not delay—

Why do you hesitate? I beg no mercy—

I have deserved to die, and I am ready.

MARQUIS (*letting his hand drop slowly—after some reflection*).  
 It were as cowardly as barbarous,  
 No! God be praised!—another way is left.

[*He lets the dagger fall and hurries out. The Princess hastens out through another door.*]

## SCENE XVIII.

*A Chamber of the Queen.*

*The QUEEN to the COUNTESS FUENTES.*

What means this noisy tumult in the palace?  
 Each breath to-day alarms me! Countess! see  
 What it portends, and hasten back with speed.  
 [*Exit COUNTESS FUENTES—The PRINCESS EBOLI rushes in.*]

## SCENE XIX.

*THE QUEEN, PRINCESS EBOLI.*

EBOLI (*breathless, pale, and wild, falls before the QUEEN*).  
 Help! Help! O Queen! he's seized!

QUEEN.

Who?

EBOLI.

He's arrested,

By the King's orders given to Marquis Posa.

QUEEN.

Who is arrested? Who?

EBOLI.

The Prince!

QUEEN.

'Thou say'st!

EBOLI.

This moment they are leading him away.

QUEEN.

And who arrested him?

EBOLI.

The Marquis Posa.

QUEEN.

Then Heaven be praised, it was the Marquis seized him!

EBOLI.

Can you speak thus, and with such tranquil mien?  
O Heavens! you do not know—you cannot think—

QUEEN.

The cause of his arrest!—some trifling error,  
Doubtless arising from his headlong youth!

EBOLI.

No! no! I know far better. No, my Queen!  
Remorseless treachery! There's no help for him.  
He dies!

QUEEN.

He dies!

EBOLI.

And I'm his murderer!

QUEEN.

What! Dies? Thou ravest! Think what thou art saying?

EBOLI.

And wherefore—wherefore dies he? Had I known  
That it would come to this!

QUEEN (*takes her affectionately by the hand*).

O dearest Princess,

Your senses are distracted, but collect  
Your wandering spirits, and relate to me  
More calmly, not in images of horror  
That fright my inmost soul, whate'er you know.  
Say, what has happened?

EBOLI.

O display not, Queen,  
Such heavenly condescension! Like hot flames  
This kindness sears my conscience. I'm not worthy  
To view thy purity with eyes profane.  
O crush the wretch, who, agonized by shame,  
Remorse, and self-reproach, writhes at thy feet!

QUEEN.

Unhappy woman! Say, what is thy guilt?

EBOLI.

Angel of light! Sweet saint! thou little know'st  
The demon, who has won thy loving smiles.  
Know her to-day—I was the wretched thief  
Who plunder'd thee.

QUEEN.

What! Thou?

EBOLI.

And gave thy letters

Up to the King!

QUEEN.

What! Thou?

EBOLI.

And dared accuse thee!

QUEEN.

Thou! Couldst thou this?

EBOLI.

Revenge and madness—love—  
I hated thee, and loved the Prince!

QUEEN.

And did

His love so prompt thee?

EBOLI.

I had own'd my love,

But met with no return.

QUEEN (*after a pause*).

Now all's explain'd!

Rise up!—you loved him—I have pardon'd you—  
I have forgotten all. Now, Princess, rise!

*[Holding out her hand to the PRINCESS.]*

EBOLI.

No! no! a foul confession still remains.

I will not rise, great Queen, till I——

QUEEN.

Then speak!

What have I yet to hear?

EBOLI.

The King! Seduction!

O! now you turn away! And in your eyes  
I read abhorrence. Yes: of that foul crime  
I charged you with, I have myself been guilty.

*[She presses her burning face to the ground. Exit QUEEN.]*

—A long pause. The COUNTESS OLIVAREZ, after some  
minutes, comes out of the Cabinet, into which the

QUEEN *entered, and finds the PRINCESS still lying in the above posture. She approaches in silence. On hearing a noise, the latter looks up and becomes like a mad person when she misses the QUEEN.*

## SCENE XX.

PRINCESS EBOLI, COUNTESS OLIVAREZ.

EBOLI.

Heavens! she has left me. I am now undone!

OLIVAREZ (*approaching her*)

My Princess—Eboli!

EBOLI.

I know your business,  
Duchess, and you come hither from the Queen,  
To speak my sentence to me—do it quickly!

OLIVAREZ.

I am commanded, by her Majesty,  
To take your cross and key.

EBOLI (*takes from her breast a golden Cross, and gives it to the DUCHESS*).

And but once more  
May I not kiss my gracious Sovereign's hand?

OLIVAREZ.

In holy Mary's convent, shall you learn  
Your fate, Princess.

EBOLI (*with a flood of tears*).

Alas! then I no more  
Shall ever see the Queen!

OLIVAREZ (*embraces her with her face turned away*).

Princess, farewell!

[*She goes hastily away. The PRINCESS follows her as far as the door of the Cabinet, which is immediately locked after the DUCHESS. She remains a few minutes silent and motionless on her knees before it. She then rises and hastens away, covering her face.*

## SCENE XXI.

QUEEN, MARQUIS POSA.

QUEEN.

Ah! Marquis, I am glad you're come at last!



MARQUIS (*pale, with a disturbed countenance and trembling voice, in solemn deep agitation, during the whole Scene*).

And is your Majesty alone? Can none  
Within the adjoining chamber overhear us?

QUEEN.

No one! But why? What news would you impart?

[*Looking at him closely, and drawing back alarmed.*

And what has wrought this change in you? Speak, Marquis!  
You make me tremble—all your features seem  
So mark'd with death!

MARQUIS.

You know, perhaps, already—

QUEEN.

'That Carlos is arrested—and they add,  
By you! Is it then true? From no one else  
Would I believe it, but yourself.

MARQUIS.

'Tis true.

QUEEN.

By you?

MARQUIS.

By me?

QUEEN (*looks at him for some time doubtingly*).

I still respect your actions

E'en when I comprehend them not. In this,  
Pardon a timid woman! I much fear  
You play a dangerous game.

MARQUIS.

And I have lost it.

QUEEN.

Merciful Heaven!

MARQUIS.

Queen, fear not! He is safe,  
But I am lost myself.

QUEEN.

What do I hear?

MARQUIS.

Who bade me hazard all, on one chance throw?  
All? And with rash, foolhardy confidence,  
Sport with the power of Heaven? Of bounded mind,

Man, who is not Omniscient, must not dare  
To guide the helm of Destiny.—'Tis just!  
But why these thoughts of self? The hour is precious,  
As life can be to man:—and who can tell  
Whether the parsimonious hand of Fate  
May not have measured my last drops of life?

QUEEN.

The hand of fate! What means this solemn tone?  
I understand these words not—but I shudder.

MARQUIS.

He's saved!—no matter at what price—he's saved!  
But only for to-day,—a few short hours  
Are his. O let him husband them!—This night  
The Prince must leave Madrid.

QUEEN.

This very night?

MARQUIS.

All measures are prepared. The post will meet him  
At the Carthusian Convent, which has served  
So long as an asylum to our friendship.  
Here will he find, in letters of exchange,  
All in the world that fortune gifts me with.  
Should more be wanting, you must e'en supply it.  
In truth, I have within my heart, full much  
To unburthen to my Carlos,—it may chance  
I shall want leisure now, to tell him all  
In person,—but this evening you will see him,  
And therefore I address myself to you.

QUEEN.

O for my peace of mind, dear Marquis, speak!  
Explain yourself more clearly! Do not use  
This dark, and fearful, and mysterious language!  
Say, what has happened?

MARQUIS.

I have yet one thing,  
A matter of importance, on my mind:  
In your hands I deposit it. My lot  
Was such, as few indeed have e'er enjoy'd—  
I lov'd a Prince's son. My heart to one—  
To that one object given—embraced the world!

I have created in my Carlos' soul,  
 A paradise for millions! O my dream  
 Was lovely!—But the will of Providence  
 Has summon'd me away, before my hour,  
 From this my beauteous work. His Roderigo  
 Soon shall be his no more, and friendship's claim  
 Will be transferr'd to love. Here, therefore, here  
 Upon this sacred altar—on the heart  
 Of his loved Queen—I lay my last bequest,  
 A precious legacy—he'll find it here,  
 When I shall be no more.

*(He turns away, his voice choked with grief.*

QUEEN.

This is the language  
 Of a dying man—it surely emanates  
 But from your blood's excitement—or does sense  
 Lie hidden in your language?

MARQUIS *(has endeavoured to collect himself, and continues in  
 a solemn voice).*

Tell the Prince,  
 That he must ever bear in mind, the oath  
 We swore, in past enthusiastic days,  
 Upon the Sacred Host. I have kept mine—  
 I'm true to him, till death—'tis now his turn—

QUEEN.

Till death?

MARQUIS.

O bid him realize the dream,  
 The glowing vision which our friendship painted,  
 Of a new—perfect realm! And let him lay  
 The first hand on the rude unshapen'd stone.  
 Whether he fail or prosper—all alike—  
 Let him commence the work. When centuries  
 Have roll'd away, shall Providence again  
 Raise to the throne, a princely youth like him,  
 And animate again a fav'rite son,  
 Whose breast shall burn with like enthusiasm.  
 Tell him, in manhood, he must still revere  
 The dreams of early youth, nor ope the heart  
 Of Heaven's all-tender flower, to canker-worms  
 Of boasted reason,—nor be led astray

<sup>1</sup> When, by the wisdom of the dust, he hears  
Enthusiasm, heavenly-born, blasphemed  
I have already told him.—

QUEEN.

Whither, Marquis?

Whither does all this tend?

MARQUIS.

And tell him farther,

I lay upon his soul the happiness  
Of man—that with my dying breath I claim,  
Demand it of him—and with justest title.  
I had design'd a new, a glorious morn,  
To waken in these kingdoms: for to me  
Philip had open'd all his inmost heart—  
Call'd me his son—bestow'd his seals upon me—  
And Alva was no more his counsellor.

*He pauses, and looks at the QUEEN for a few moments in silence.*

You weep!—I know those tears, beloved soul!  
O they are tears of joy!—but it is past—  
For ever past!—Carlos or I? The choice  
Was prompt and fearful. One of us must perish!  
And I will be that one. O ask no more!—

QUEEN.

Now, now, at last, I comprehend your meaning,  
Unhappy man! What have you done?

MARQUIS.

( ut off

Two transient hours of evening, to secure  
A long bright summer day! I now give up  
The King for ever. What were I to the King?  
In such cold soil, no rose of mine could bloom;  
In my great friend, must Europe's fortune ripen  
Spain I bequeath to him, still bathed in blood,  
From Philip's iron hand. But woe to him,  
Woe to us both, if I have chosen wrong!  
But no—O no!—I know my Carlos better—  
'Twill never come to pass!—for this my Queen,  
You stand my surety.

*[After a silence.]*

Yes! I saw his love

In its first blossom—saw his fatal passion

Take root in his young heart. I had full power  
 To check it; but I did not. The attachment  
 Which seem'd to me not guilty, I still nourish'd.  
 The world may censure me, but I repent not,  
 Nor does my heart ~~repent~~ <sup>excuse</sup> me. I saw life  
 Where death appear'd to others. In a flame  
 So hopeless, I discern'd Hope's golden beam.  
 I wish'd to lead him to the excellent—  
 To exult him to the highest point of beauty.  
 Mortality denied a model to me,  
 And language, words. Then did I bend his views  
 To this point only—and my whole endeavour  
 Was to explain to him his love.

QUEEN.

Your friend,

Marquis! so wholly occupied your mind, '  
 That for his cause you quite forgot ~~my~~ <sup>your</sup> own—  
 Could you suppose that I had thrown aside  
 All woman's weaknesses, that you could dare  
 Make me his angel, and confide alone  
 In virtue, for his armour? You forget  
 What risk the heart must run, when we ennoble  
 Passion with such a beautiful name as this

MARQUIS.

Yes, in all other women—but in one,  
 One only, 'tis not so.—For you, I swear it.  
 And should you blush t'indulge the pure desire  
 To call heroic virtue into life?  
 Can it affect King Philip, that his works  
 Of noblest art, in the Escorial, raise  
 Immortal longings in the painter's soul,  
 Who stands entranced before them? Do the sounds  
 That slumber in the lute, belong alone  
 To him who buys the chords? With ear unmoved  
 He may preserve his treasure:—he has bought  
 The wretched right to shiver it to atoms,  
 But not the power to wake its silver tones,  
 Or, in the magic of its sounds, dissolve.—  
 Truth is created for the sage, as beauty  
 Is for the feeling heart. They own each other.  
 And this belief, no coward prejudice

Shall make me e'er disclaim    Then promise, Queen,  
That you will ever love him.    That false shame,  
Or fancied dignity, shall never make you  
Yield to the voice of base dissimulation:—  
That you will love him still unchanged, for ever.  
Promise me this, O Queen!    Here solemnly  
Say, do you promise?

QUEEN.

That my heart alone  
Shall ever vindicate my love, I promise—

MARQUIS (*drawing his hand back*).

Now I die satisfied—my work is done.

[*He bows to the QUEEN, and is about to go.*]

QUEEN (*follows him with her eyes in silence*)

You are then going, Marquis, and have not  
Told me how soon—and when—we meet again?

MARQUIS (*comes back once more, his face turned away*)

Yes, we shall surely meet again!

QUEEN.

Now, Posa,

I understand you.    Why have you done this?

MARQUIS.

Carlos, or I myself!

QUEEN.

No! no! you rush  
Headlong into a deed you deem sublime.  
Do not deceive yourself: I know you well:  
Long have you thirsted for it.    If your pride  
But have its fill, what matters it to you  
Though thousand hearts should break.    O! now, at length,  
I comprehend your feelings—'tis the love  
Of admiration which has won your heart—

MARQUIS (*surprised, aside*).

No! I was not prepared for this—

QUEEN (*after a pause*).

O Marquis!

Is there no hope of preservation?

MARQUIS.

None.

QUEEN.

None? O consider well! None possible!  
Not e'en by me?

MARQUIS.

None even, Queen, by thee.

QUEEN.

You but half know me—I have courage, Marquis—

MARQUIS.

I know it—

QUEEN.

And no means of safety '

MARQUIS.

None!

QUEEN (*turning away, and covering her face*).

Go! Never more shall I respect a man—

MARQUIS (*casts himself on his knees before her in evident emotion*).

O Queen! O heaven! how lovely still is life!

*[He starts up and rushes out. The QUEEN retires into her Cabinet.]*

## SCENE XXII.

DUKE ALVA and DOMINGO walking up and down in silence and separately. COUNT LERMA comes out of the KING'S Cabinet, and afterwards DON RAYMOND OF TAXIS, the Post-master General.

LERMA

Has not the Marquis yet appeared?

ALVA.

Not yet

*[LERMA about to re-enter the Cabinet.]*

TAXIS (*enters*).

Count Lerma! Pray announce me to the King?

LERMA.

His Majesty cannot be seen.

TAXIS.

But say

That I must see him: that my business is

Of urgent import to his Majesty.  
Make haste—it will admit of no delay.

[LIERMA enters the Cabinet.]

ALVA.

Dear Taxis, you must learn a little patience.  
You cannot see the King.

TAXIS.

Not see him ! Why ?

ALVA.

You should have been considerate, and procured  
Permission from the Marquis Posa first—  
Who keeps both son and father in confinement.

TAXIS.

The Marquis Posa ! Right—that is the man  
From whom I bring this letter.

ALVA.

Ha ! What letter ?

TAXIS.

A letter to be forwarded to Brussels.

ALVA (*attentively*).

To Brussels ?

TAXIS.

And I bring it to the King.

ALVA.

Indeed ! to Brussels ! Heard you that, Domingo ?

DOMINGO (*joining them*).

Full of suspicion !

TAXIS.

And with anxious mien,  
And deep embarrassment, he gave it to me.

DOMINGO.

Embarrassment ! To whom is it directed ?

TAXIS.

The Prince of Orange and Nassau.

ALVA.

To William !

There's treason here, Domingo !

DOMINGO.

Nothing less !



In truth this letter must, without delay,  
Be laid before the King. A noble service  
You render, worthy man—to be so firm  
In the discharge of duty.

TAXIS.

Reverend Sir !

'Tis but my duty.

ALVA.

But you do it well.

LERMA (*coming out of the Cabinet, addressing TAXIS*).

The King will see you.

[TAXIS goes in.

Is the Marquis come ?

DOMINGO.

He has been sought for everywhere.

ALVA.

'Tis strange !

The Prince is a state prisoner ! And the King  
Knows not the reason why '—

DOMINGO.

He never came

To explain the business here.

ALVA.

What says the King ?

LERMA.

The King spoke not a word.

[A noise in the Cabinet.

ALVA.

What noise is that ?

TAXIS (*coming out of the Cabinet*).

Count Lerma !

[Both enter.

ALVA (*to DOMINGO*).

What so deeply can engage them

DOMINGO.

That look of fear !—This intercepted letter !  
It augurs nothing good.

ALVA.

He sends for Lerma !

Yet he must know full well, that you and I  
Are both in waiting

DOMINGO.

Ah! our day is over!

ALVA.

And am I not the same, to whom these doors  
Flew open once? But ah! how changed is all  
Around me, and how strange!

[DOMINGO approaches the Cabinet door softly and remains listening before it.

ALVA (after a pause).

Hark!—All is still

And silent as the grave! I hear them breathe.

DOMINGO.

The double tapestry absorbs the sounds!

ALVA.

Away! there's some one coming.—All appears  
So solemn and so still—as if this instant  
Some deep momentous question were decided.

#### SCENE XXIII.

*The PRINCE OF PARMA, the DUKES OF FERIA and MEDINA  
SIDONIA, with other Grandees enter—the preceding.*

PARMA.

Say, can we see the King?

ALVA.

No!

PARMA.

Who is with him?

FERIA.

The Marquis Posa, doubtless?

ALVA.

Every instant

He is expected here.

PARMA.

This moment we

Arrive from Saragossa. Thro' Madrid  
'Terror prevails! Is the announcement true?

DOMINGO.

Alas, too true!

FERIA.

That he has been arrested  
By the Marquis!

ALVA.

Yes.

PARMA.

And wherefore? What's the cause?

ALVA.

Wherefore? That no one knows, except the King  
And Marquis Posa.

PARMA.

And without the warrant  
Of the assembled Cortes of the Realm?

FERIA.

That man shall suffer, who has lent a hand  
'To infringe the nation's rights.

ALVA.

And so say I!

MELINA SIDONIA.

And I!

THE OTHER GRANDEES.

And all of us!

ALVA.

Who'll follow me  
Into the cabinet? I'll throw myself  
Before the Monarch's feet

FERMA (*rushing out of the cabinet*).

The Duke of Alva!

DOMINGO.

Then God be praised at last!

LERMA.

When Marquis Posa  
Comes, say the King's engaged and he'll be sent for.

DOMINGO (*to LERMA; all the others having gathered round him,  
full of anxious expectation.*)

Count! What has happen'd? You are pale as death!

LERMA (*hastening away*).

Fell villany!

PARMA and FERIA.

What! what!

MEDINA SIDONIA.

How is the King?

DOMINGO (*at the same time*).

Fell villany! Explain—

LIERMA.

The King shed tears!

DOMINGO.

Shed tears!

ALL (*together with astonishment*)

The King shed tears!

[*The bell rings in the Cabinet, COUNT LIERMA hastens in.*

DOMINGO.

Count, yet one word.

Pardon!—He's gone! We're fetter'd in amazement.

#### SCENE XXIV.

PRINCESS EBOLI, FERIA, MEDINA SIDONIA, PARMA, DOMINGO,  
and other *Grandees*.

EBOLI (*hurriedly and distractedly*).

Where is the King? Where? I must speak with him.

[*To FERIA.*

Conduct me to him, Duke!

FERIA.

The Monarch is

Engaged in urgent business. No one now

Can be admitted.

EBOLI.

Has he signed, as yet,

The fatal sentence? He has been deceived.

DOMINGO (*giving her a significant look at a distance*).

The Princess Eboli!

EBOLI (*going to him*).

What! you here, Priest?

The very man I want! You can confirm

My testimony!

[*She seizes his hand and would drag him into the Cabinet.*

DOMINGO.

I? You rave Princess!

FERIA.

Hold back! The King cannot attend you now.

EBOLI.

But he must hear me—he must hear the truth!  
The truth!—were he ten times a Deity!

DOMINGO.

Away! You hazard every thing! Stand back!

EBOLI.

Man! tremble at the anger of thy idol.—  
I have nought left to hazard.

[Attempts to enter the Cabinet; ALVA rushes out, his  
eyes sparkling, triumph in his gait. He hastens to  
DOMINGO, and embraces him.

ALVA.

Let each Church  
Resound with high Te Deums. Victory  
At length is ours

DOMINGO.

What!—ours?

ALVA (*to DOMINGO and the other Grandees*).

Now to the King.

You shall, hereafter, hear the sequel from me.

## ACT V.

## SCENE I.

*A Chamber in the Royal Palace, separated from a large fore-court by an iron-barred gate. Sentinels walking up and down.*

CARLOS sitting at a table, with his hand leaning forward on his arms, as if he were asleep. In the back-ground of the Chamber are some Officers, confined with him. The MARQUIS POSA enters, unobserved by him, and whispers to the Officers, who immediately withdraw. He himself steps close up to CARLOS, and looks at him for a few minutes in silent sorrow. At last he makes a motion, which awakens him out of his stupor.

CARLOS *rises, and seeing the MARQUIS, starts back. He regards him for some time with fixed eyes, and draws his hand over his forehead as if he wished to recollect something.*

MARQUIS.

Carlos! 'tis I.

CARLOS (*gives him his hand*).

Com'st thou to me again?

'Tis friendly of thee, truly.

MARQUIS.

Here, I thought

Thou mightest need a friend.

CARLOS

Indeed! Was that

Thy real thought?—O joy unspeakable!

Right well I knew thou still wert true to me.

MARQUIS.

I have deserved this from thee.

CARLOS.

Hast thou not?

And now we understand each other fully,  
It joys my heart. This kindness, this forbearance  
Becomes our noble souls. For should there be  
One rash, unjust demand amongst my wishes,  
Wouldst thou, for that, refuse me what was just?  
Virtue I know may often be severe,  
But never is she cruel and inhuman.  
O! it hath cost thee much—full well I know  
How thy kind heart with bitter anguish bled,  
As thy hands deck'd their victim for the altar!

MARQUIS.

What mean'st thou, Carlos?

CARLOS.

Thou, thyself, wilt now

Fulfil the joyous course I should have run.—

Thou wilt bestow on Spain those golden days,

She might have hoped, in vain, to win from me.

I'm lost, for ever lost—thou saw'st it clearly.—

This fatal love has scatter'd—and for ever—

All the bright early blossoms of my mind.

To all thy great exalted hopes I'm dead.  
 Chance led thee to the King—or Providence,—  
 It cost thee but my secret—and at once  
 He was thine own—thou may'st become his angel:  
 But I am lost, tho' Spain perhaps may flourish.  
 Well, there is nothing to condemn, if not  
 My own mad blindness. O, I should have known  
 That thou art no less great, than tender-hearted.

MARQUIS.

No! I foresaw not, I consider'd not  
 That friendship's generous heart, would lead thee on,  
 Beyond my worldly prudence. I have err'd,  
 My fabric's shatter'd—I forgot thy heart.

CARLOS.

Yet, if it had been possible to spare  
 Her fate—O how intensely I had thank'd thee!  
 Could I not bear the burden by myself?  
 And why must she be made a second victim?  
 But now no more, I'll spare thee this reproach.  
 What is the Queen to thee? Say, dost thou love her?  
 Could thy exalted virtue o'er consult  
 The petty interests of my wretched passion?  
 O pardon me!—I was unjust——

MARQUIS.

Thou art so!

But not for this reproach Deserved I oue,  
 I merit all—and then I should not stand  
 Before you as I do. [*He takes out his portfolio*]

I have some letters

To give you back, of those you trusted to me.

CARLOS (*looks first at the letters, then at the MARQUIS, in  
 astonishment*).

How!

MARQUIS.

I return them now, because they may  
 Prove safer in thy custody, than mine.

CARLOS.

What mean'st thou? Has his Majesty not read them?  
 Have they not been before him?

MARQUIS.

What, these letters!

CARLOS.

Thou didst not show them all then.

MARQUIS.

Who has said

That ever I show'd one ?

CARLOS (*astonished*).

Can it be so ?

Count Lerma——

MARQUIS

He! he told thee so! Now all  
Is clear as day. But who could have foreseen it?  
Lerma! O no, he hath not learned to lie.  
'Tis true, the King has all the other letters.

CARLOS (*looks at him long with speechless astonishment*).  
But wherefore am I here?

MARQUIS

For caution's sake.

Lest thou should chance, a second time, to make  
An Eboli thy confidant.

CARLOS (*as if waking from a dream*).

Ha! Now

I see it all—all is explain'd.

MARQUIS (*goes to the door*).

Who's there?

## SCENE II.

DUKE ALVA.—*The former.*

ALVA (*approaching the PRINCE with respect, but turning his  
back on the MARQUIS during the whole scene*).

Prince, you are free. Deputed by the King,  
I come to tell you so.

[CARLOS *looks at the MARQUIS with astonishment*.  
*General silence.*

And I, in truth,

Am fortunate, to have this honour first——

CARLOS (*looking at both with extreme amazement, after a pause  
to the DUKE*).

I am imprison'd, Duke, and set at freedom,  
Unconscious of the cause of one, or other.



ALVA.

As far as I know, Prince, 'twas through an error,  
'To which the King was driven, by a traitor.

CARLOS.

Then am I here by order of the King?

ALVA.

Yes, through an error of his Majesty.

CARLOS.

That gives me pain indeed.—But when the King  
Commits an error, 'twould beseem the King.  
Methinks, to remedy the fault in person.  
I am Don Philip's son—and curious eyes,  
And slanderous looks, are on me. What the King  
Hath done, from sense of duty, ne'er will I  
Appear to owe to your considerate favour.,  
I am prepared to appear before the Cortes,  
And will not take my sword from such a hand.

ALVA.

The King will never hesitate to grant  
Your Highness a request so just. Permit  
That I conduct you to him

CARLOS

Here I stay  
Until the King, or all Madrid, shall come,  
To lead me from my prison. Take my answer.

[ALVA withdraws. He is still seen for some time lingering in the Court, and giving orders to the guards.]

### SCENE III.

CARLOS and MARQUIS POSA.

CARLOS (*after the departure of the DUKE, full of expectation and astonishment, to the MARQUIS*).

What means all this?—Inform me, Roderigo—  
Art thou not, then, the Minister?

MARQUIS.

I was,

As thou canst well perceive—

[*Going to him with great emotion.*]

O Carlos! Now

I have succeeded—yes—it is accomplish'd—  
'Tis over now—Omnipotence be praised,  
To whom I owe success.

CARLOS.

Success! What mean you?

Thy words perplex me!

MARQUIS (*takes his hand*).

Carlos! thou art saved—

Art free—but I——

[*He stops short.*]

CARLOS.

But thou——

MARQUIS.

Thus to my breast

I press thee now, with friendship's fullest right,  
A right I've bought with all I hold most dear.—  
How great, how lovely, Carlos, is this moment  
Of self-approving joy?

CARLOS.

What sudden change

I mark upon thy features! Proudly now  
Thy bosom heaves, thine eyes dart vivid fire!

MARQUIS.

We must say farewell, Carlos! Tremble not,  
But be a man! And what thou more shalt hear,  
Promise me, not by unavailing sorrow,  
Unworthy of great souls, to aggravate  
The pangs of parting. I am lost to thee,  
Carlos, for many years—fools say, for ever.

[CARLOS *withdraws his hand, but makes no reply.*]

Be thou a man: I've reckon'd much on thee—  
I have not even shunn'd to pass with thee  
This awful hour—which men, in words of fear,  
Have term'd the final one. I own it, Carlos,  
I joy to pass it thus. Come, let us sit—  
I feel myself grown weary and exhausted—

[*He approaches CARLOS, who is in a lifeless stupor, and allows himself to be involuntarily drawn down by him.*]

Where art thou?—No reply!—I must be brief.  
Upon the day that follow'd our last meeting

At the Carthusian Monast'ry, the King  
Call'd me before him. What ensued, thou knowest,  
And all Madrid. Thou hast not heard, however,  
Thy secret even then had reach'd his ears—  
That letters, in the Queen's possession found,  
Had testified against thee. This I learn'd  
From his own lips—I was his confidant.

*[He pauses for CARLOS' answer, but he still remains silent.]*  
Yes, Carlos, with my lips I broke my faith—  
Guided the plot, myself, that work'd thy ruin.  
Thy deed spoke trumpet-tongued; to clear thee fully  
'Twas now too late: to frustrate his revenge,  
Was all that now remain'd for me; and so  
I made myself thy enemy to—serve thee  
With fuller power—dost thou not hear me, Carlos?

CARLOS.

Go on!—go on! I hear thee.

MARQUIS.

To this point  
I'm guiltless—But the unaccustom'd beams  
Of royal favour dazzled me. The rumour,  
As I had well foreseen, soon reach'd thine ears:  
But by mistaken delicacy led,  
And blinded by the vain desire, to end  
My enterprise alone, I kept conceal'd  
From friendship's ear, my hazardous design.  
This was my fatal error! Here I fail'd!—  
I know it.—My self-confidence was madness.  
Pardon that confidence—'twas founded, Carlos,  
Upon our friendship's everlasting base.

*[He pauses.—CARLOS passes from torpid silence to violent agitation.]*

That which I feared, befel. Unreal dangers  
Alarmed your mind.—The bleeding Queen—the tumult  
Within the Palace—Lerma's interference—  
And, last of all, my own mysterious silence,  
Conspired to overwhelm thy heart with wonder.  
Thou waverd'st, thought'st me lost; but far too noble  
To doubt thy friend's integrity, thy soul  
Clothed his defection with a robe of honour,  
Nor judg'd him faithless, till it found a motive

To screen and justify his breach of faith.  
 Forsaken by thy only friend—'twas then  
 Thou sought'st the arms of Princess Eboli—  
 A demon's arms! 'Twas she betray'd thee, Carlos!  
 I saw thee fly to her—a dire foreboding  
 Struck on my heart—I follow'd thee, too late!  
 Already wert thou prostrate at her feet,  
 The dread avowal had escaped thy lips—  
 No way was left to save thee.

CARLOS.

No! - her heart

Was moved. thou dost mistake, her heart was moved

MARQUIS.

Night overspread my mind. No remedy,  
 No refuge, no retreat, was left to me  
 In nature's boundless compass. Blind despair  
 Transform'd me to a fury—to a tiger—  
 I raised my dagger to a woman's breast.  
 But in that moment—in that dreadful moment—  
 A radiant sun-beam fell upon my soul.  
 "Could I mislead the King! Could I succeed  
 In making him think me the criminal!  
 Howe'er improbable, the very guilt  
 Will be enough to win the King's belief.  
 I'll dare the task—a sudden thunderbolt  
 May make the tyrant start—what want I further?  
 He stops to think, and Carlos thus gains time  
 To fly to Brussels."

CARLOS.

And hast thou done this?

MARQUIS.

I have despatch'd a letter to Prince William,  
 Saying I loved the Queen, and had escaped  
 The King's mistrust, in the unjust suspicion  
 Which falsely fell on thee—that I had found  
 Means, through the Monarch's favour, to obtain  
 Free access to the Queen. I added, farther,  
 That I was fearful of discovery—  
 That thou hadst learn'd my secret, and hadst sped  
 To Princess Eboli, with hopes through her  
 To warn the Queen—that I had made thee prisoner—

And now that all seem'd lost, I had resolved  
To fly to Brussels. This same letter I——

CARLOS (*interrupts him terrified*).  
Hast surely not entrusted to the Post!  
Thou know'st that letters to Brabant and Flanders——

MARQUIS.  
Are given to the King; and as things go,  
Taxis would seem to have discharged his duty.

CARLOS.  
Heavens! then I'm lost.

MARQUIS.  
How lost? What meanest thou?

CARLOS.  
And thou, alas! art lost together with me—  
This dreadful fraud my father ne'er will pardon.

MARQUIS.  
This fraud! Thou'rt mad! Who will disclose it to him?

CARLOS (*regards him with a fixed look*).  
Who! Dost thou ask? I will myself.

MARQUIS.  
Thou ravest!  
Stand back——

CARLOS.  
Away! For Heaven's sake hold me not.  
Whilst I stay here, he's hiring the assassins.

MARQUIS.  
Then is our time more precious—and we still  
Have much to say.

CARLOS.  
What! Before all is finished?  
[*He makes another effort to go. The MARQUIS holds him by the arm, and looks at him impressively.*

MARQUIS.  
Carlos! was I so scrupulous—so eager—  
When thou, a boy, didst shed thy blood for me?  
CARLOS (*with emotion, and full of admiration*).  
And Providence!

MARQUIS.  
Reserve thyself for Flanders!

The kingdom is thy destiny—'tis mine  
To give my life for thee.

CARLOS (*takes his hand with deep sensibility*).

No, no ! he will not,

Cannot resist a virtue so sublime.

I will conduct thee to him, and together,

Arm linked in arm, will we appear before him.

Then thus will I address him : " Father, see,

This is the way a friend acts towards his friend.

'Trust me, 'twill move him—it will touch his heart.

He's not without humanity,—my father.

Yes, it will move him. With hot tears, his eyes

Will overflow—and he will pardon us.

[*A shot is fired through the iron grating.*—CARLOS  
*leaps up.*

CARLOS.

Whom was that meant for ?

MARQUIS (*sinking down*).

I believe—for me.

CARLOS (*falling to the earth with a loud cry of grief*).

O God of Mercy !

MARQUIS.

He is quick—the King !—

I had hoped—a little longer—Carlos—think

Of means of flight—dost hear me ?—of thy flight.

Thy mother—knows it all—I can no more.

[*Dies.*

[CARLOS remains by the Corpse, like one bereft of life  
After some time the KING enters, accompanied by  
many GRANDEES ; and starts, panic-struck, at the  
sight. A general and deep silence. The GRANDEES  
range themselves in a semicircle round them both, and  
regard the KING and his SON alternately. The latter  
continues without any sign of life. The KING regards  
him in thoughtful silence.

#### SCENE IV.

The KING, CARLOS, the DUKES ALVA, FERIA, and MEDINA  
SIDONIA, PRINCE OF PARMA, COUNT LERMA, DOMINGO, and  
numerous Grandes.

KING (*in a gentle tone*).

Thy prayer hath met a gracious hearing, Prince,

And here I come, with all the noble peers  
Of this my Court, to bring thee liberty.

[CARLOS raises his eyes and looks around him, like one awakened from a dream. His eyes are fixed now on the KING, now on the corpse; he gives no answer.

Receive thy sword again We've been too rash!

[He approaches him, holds out his hand, and assists him to rise.

My son's not in his place;—Carlos arise!  
Come to thy father's arms! His love awaits thee.

CARLOS (*receives the embrace of the KING without any consciousness. Suddenly recollects himself, pauses and looks fixedly at him*).

Thou smell'st of blood—no, I cannot embrace thee!

[Pushes his father back. All the Grandees are in commotion. CARLOS to them:

Nay, stand not thus confounded and amaz'd!  
What monstrous action have I done? Defiled  
The Anointed of the Lord! O fear me not,  
I would not lay a hand on him. Behold  
Stamp'd on his forehead is the damning brand!  
The hand of God hath mark'd him!

KING (*about to go quickly*).

Nobles! follow.

CARLOS.

Whither? You stir not from this spot.

[Detaining the KING forcibly with both hands, while with one he manages to seize the sword which the KING had brought with him, and it comes from the scabbard.

KING.

What! Draw

A sword upon thy father?

ALL THE GRANDEES (*drawing their swords*).  
Regicide!

CARLOS (*holding the KING firmly with one hand, the naked sword in the other*).

Put up your swords! What! Think you I am mad?  
I am not so: or you were much to blame

Thus to remind me, that upon the point  
 Of this my sword, his trembling life doth hover.  
 I pray you, stand aloof; for souls like mine  
 Need soothing. 'There—hold back! And with the King,  
 What I have yet to settle, touches not  
 Your loyalty. See there—his hand is bloody!  
 Do you not see it? And now look you here!

[*Pointing to the corse.*]

This hath he done with a well practised hand.

KING (*to the Grandees, who press anxiously round him*).

Retire! Why do you trouble? Are we not  
 Father and son? I will yet wait and see  
 To what atrocious crime his nature——

CARLOS.

Nature!

I know her not. Murder is now the word!  
 The bonds of all humanity are sever'd.  
 Thine own hands have dissolved them, through the realm.  
 Shall I respect a tie, which thou hast scorn'd?  
 O see! see here! the foulest deed of blood  
 That e'er the world beheld. Is there no God?  
 That kings; in his creation, work such havoc?  
 Is there **no** God, I ask? Since mothers' wombs  
 Bore children, One alone—and only One—  
 So guiltlessly hath died. And art thou sensible  
 What thou hast done? O no! he know it not:  
 Knows not that he has robb'd—despoil'd the world  
 Of a more noble, precious, dearer life,  
 Than he and all his century can boast.

KING (*with a tone of softness*).

If I have been too hasty, Carlos—thou,  
 For whom I have thus acted, should at least  
 Not call me to account.

CARLOS.

Is't possible!

Did you then never guess, how dear to me  
 Was he, who here lies dead? Thou lifeless corse!  
 Instruct him—aid his wisdom, to resolve  
 This dark enigma now. He was my friend.



And would you know why he has perish'd thus ?  
He gave his life for me.

KING.

Ha ! my suspicions !

CARLOS.

Pardon, thou bleeding corse, that I profane  
Thy virtue, to such ears ! But let him blush  
With deep-felt shame,—the crafty politician,—  
That his greyheaded wisdom was o'erreached  
E'en by the judgment of a youth ! Yes, Sire !  
We two were brothers ! Bound by nobler bands  
Than nature ties. His whole life's bright career  
Was love. His noble death was love for me.  
E'en in the moment, when his brief esteem  
Exalted you, he was my own. And when  
With fascinating tongue, he sported with  
Your haughty, giant mind, 'twas your conceit  
To bridle him ; but you became, yourself,  
The pliant tool of his exalted plans.  
That I became a prisoner—my arrest—  
Was his deep friendship's meditated work.  
That letter to Prince William, was design'd  
To save my life. It was the first deceit  
He ever practised ! To ensure my safety,  
He rush'd on death himself and nobly perish'd.  
You lavish'd on him all your favour, -- yet  
For me he died. Your heart, your confidence,  
You forced upon him. As a toy, he held  
Your sceptre and your power,—he cast them from him,  
And gave his life for me.

[*The KING stands motionless, with eyes fixed on the ground ; all the Grandees regard him with surprise and alarm.*]

How could it be  
That you gave credit to his strange deceit ?  
Meanly indeed he valued you, to try  
By such coarse artifice to win his ends !  
You dared to court his friendship, but gave way  
Before a test so simple. O no ! never  
For souls like yours, was such a being form'd !  
That well he knew himself, when he rejected

Your crowns, your gifts, your greatness, and yourself.  
 This fine-toned lyre broke in your iron hand.  
 And you could do no more than murder him!

ALVA (*never having taken his eyes from the KING, and observing his emotion with uneasiness, approaches him with apprehension*).

Keep not this death-like silence, Sire! Look round,  
 And speak at least to us!

CARLOS.

Once, you were not  
 Indifferent to him. And deeply once,  
 You occupied his thoughts. It might have been  
 His lot, to make you happy. His full heart  
 Might have enriched you, with its mere abundance.  
 An atom of his soul, had been enough  
 To make a God of you. You've robb'd yourself -  
 Plunder'd yourself and me. What could you give,  
 To raise again a spirit like to this?

[*Deep silence. Many of the Grandees turn away, or conceal their faces in their mantles.*]

O ye! who stand around with terror dumb,  
 And mute surprise, do not condemn the youth,  
 Who holds this language to the King, his father!  
 Look on this corse! Behold! for me he died.  
 If ye have tears—if, in your veins flows blood,  
 Not molten brass—look here, and blame not.

[*He turns to the KING with more self-possession and calmness.*]

Doubtless you wait the end of this rude scene?  
 Here is my sword, for you are still my King.  
 Think not I fear your vengeance. Murder me,  
 As you have murder'd this most noble man!  
 My life is forfeit,—that I know full well.  
 But what is life to me? I here renounce  
 All that this world can offer to my hopes.  
 Seek among strangers for a son. Here lies  
 My kingdom.

[*He sinks down on the corse, and takes no part in what follows. A confused tumult and the noise of a crowd is heard in the distance. All is deep silence*]

round the KING. *His eyes scan the circle over, but no one returns his looks.*

KING.

What! Will no one make reply?  
Each eye upon the ground, each look abash'd!  
My sentence is pronounced. I read it here,  
Proclaim'd in all this lifeless mute demeanour.  
My vassals have condemn'd me.

[*Silence as before. The tumult grows louder. A murmur is heard among the Grandees. They exchange embarrassed looks. COUNT LERMA at length gently touches ALVA.*

LERMA.

Here 's rebellion!

ALVA (*in a low voice*).

I fear it.

LERMA.

It approaches! They are coming!

SCENE V.

*An Officer of the Body Guard. The former.*

OFFICER (*urgently*).

Rebellion! Where 's the King?

[*He makes his way through the crowd, up to the KING.*

Madrid 's in arms!

To thousands swell'd, the soldiery and people  
Surround the palace; and reports are spread—  
That Carlos is a prisoner—that his life  
Is threaten'd. And the mob demand to see  
Him living, or Madrid will be in flames.

THE GRANDDEES (*with excitement*).

Defend the King!

ALVA (*to the KING, who remains quiet and unmoved*).

Fly, Sire! your life 's in danger.

As yet we know not who has arm'd the people.

KING (*rousing from his stupor, and advancing with dignity among them*)

Stands my throne firm, and am I sovereign yet,  
Over this Empire? No! I'm King no more.  
These cowards weep—moved by a puny boy.

They only wait the signal, to desert me.  
I am betray'd by rebels!

ALVA.

Dreadful thought!

KING.

There! fling yourselves before him—down before  
The young, the expectant King; I'm ~~nothing~~ now,  
But a forsaken, old, defenceless man!

ALVA.

Spaniards! is't come to this?

*[All crowd round the KING, and fall on their knees before him with drawn swords. CARLOS remains alone with the corse, deserted by all.]*

KING *(tearing off his mantle and throwing it from him)*.

There! clothe him now

With this my royal mantle; and on high

Bear him, in triumph, o'er my trampled corse!

*[He falls senseless in ALVA'S and LLERMA'S arms.]*

LLERMA.

For Heaven's sake, help!

FERIA.

O sad, disastrous chance!

LLERMA.

He faints!

ALVA *(leaves the KING in LLERMA'S and FERIA'S hands)*.

Attend his Majesty! whilst I

Make it my aim to tranquillize Madrid.

*[Exit ALVA. The KING is borne off, attended by all the Grandes.]*

## SCENE VI.

CARLOS remains behind with the corse.—After a few moments LOUIS MERCADO appears, looks cautiously round him, and stands a long time silent behind the PRINCE, who does not observe him.

MERCADO.

I come, Prince, from her Majesty the Queen.

*[CARLOS turns away and makes no reply.]*

My name, Mercado, I'm the Queen's physician :  
See my credentials.

[*Shows the Prince a signet ring.* CARLOS *remains still*  
*silent.*

And the Queen desires  
To speak with you to-day—on weighty business.

CARLOS.

Nothing is weighty in this world to me.

MERCADO.

A charge the Marquis Posa left with her.

CARLOS (*looking up quickly*).

Indeed ! I come this instant.

MERCADO.

No, not yet, .

Most gracious Prince ! you must delay till night.  
Each avenue is watch'd, the guards are doubled,  
You ne'er could reach the palace unperceived ;  
You would endanger everything.

CARLOS.

And yet—

MERCADO.

I know one means alone that can avail us  
'Tis the Queen's thought, and she suggests it to you ;  
But it is bold, adventurous and strange !

CARLOS.

What is it ?

MERCADO.

A report has long prevail'd,  
That in the secret vaults, beneath the palace,  
At midnight, shrouded in a monk's attire,  
The Emperor's departed spirit walks.  
The people still give credit to the tale,  
And the guards watch the post, with inward terror.  
Now, if you but determine to assume  
This dress, you may pass freely through the guards,  
Until you reach the chamber of the Queen,  
Which this small key will open. Your attire  
Will save you from attack. But on the spot,  
Prince ! your decision must be made at once.

The requisite apparel, and the mask,  
Are ready in your chamber. I must haste  
And take the Queen your answer.

CARLOS.

And the hour?

MERCADO.

Is midnight.

CARLOS.

Then inform her I will come.

[*Exit MERCADO*]

SCENE VII.

CARLOS and COUNT LERMA.

LERMA

Save yourself, Prince. The King's enraged against you.  
Your liberty, if not your life's in danger!  
Ask me no farther—I have stolen away  
To give you warning—fly this very instant.

CARLOS

Heaven will protect me!

LERMA.

As the Queen observed  
To me, this moment, you must leave Madrid  
This very day, and fly to Brussels. Prince.  
Postpone it not I pray you. The commotion  
Favours your flight. The Queen, with this design,  
Has raised it. No one will presume so far,  
As to lay hand on you. Swift steeds await you  
At the Carthusian Convent, and behold  
Here are your weapons, should you be attacked.  
[*LERMA gives him a dagger and pistols.*]

CARLOS.

Thanks, thanks, Count Lerma!

LERMA.

This day's sad event  
Has moved my inmost soul! No faithful friend  
Will ever love like him. No patriot breathes  
But weeps for you. More now I dare not say.

CARLOS.

Count Lerma! he who's gone, consider'd you  
A man of honour.

LERMA.

Farewell, Prince, again!  
Success attend you! Happier times will come—  
But I shall be no more. Receive my homage!  
[*Falls on one knee.*]

CARLOS (*endeavours to prevent him, with much emotion*).  
Not so—not so, Count! I am too much moved—  
I would not be unmann'd!

LERMA (*kissing his hand with feeling*).

My children's king!  
To die for you, will be their privilege!  
It is not mine, alas! But in those children,  
Remember me! Return in peace to Spain.  
May you on Philip's throne, feel as a man,  
For you have learn'd to suffer! Undertake  
No bloody deed against your father, Prince!  
Philip compell'd his father to yield up  
The throne to him; and this same Philip now,  
Trembles at his own son. Think, Prince, of that!  
And may Heaven prosper and direct your path!

[*Exit quickly.* CARLOS *about to hasten away by another side, but turns rapidly round, and throws himself down before the corse, which he again folds in his arms. He then hurries from the room.*]

## SCENE VIII.

*The King's Antechamber.*

DUKE ALVA and DUKE FERIA *enter in conversation.*

ALVA.

The town is quieted. How is the King?

FERIA.

In the most fearful state. Within his chamber,  
He is shut up, and whatsoever may happen,  
He will admit no person to his presence.  
The treason of the Marquis, has at once  
Changed his whole nature. We no longer know him.

ALVA.

I must go to him, nor respect his feelings.  
A great discovery which I have made——

FERIA.

A new discovery ?

ALVA

A Carthusian monk  
My Guards observed, with stealthy footsteps, creep  
Into the Prince's chamber, and inquire  
With anxious curiosity, about  
The Marquis Posa's death. They seized him straight,  
And question'd him. Urged by the fear of death,  
He made confession, that he bore about him  
Papers of high importance, which the Marquis  
Enjoin'd him to deliver to the Prince,  
If, before sunset, he should not return.

FERIA.

Well, and what further ?

ALVA.

Those same letters state  
That Carlos from Madrid must fly, before  
The morning dawn.

FERIA.

Indeed !

ALVA.

And that a ship at Cadiz lies  
Ready for sea, to carry him to Flushing.  
And that the Netherlands but wait his presence,  
To shake the Spanish fetters from their arms.

FERIA.

Can this be true ?

ALVA.

And other letters say,  
A fleet of Soliman's will sail for Rhodes,  
According to the treaty, to attack  
The Spanish squadron in the Midland seas.

FERIA.

Impossible !

ALVA.

And hence, I understand  
The object of the journeys, which of late



'The Marquis made thro' Europe. 'Twas no less,  
Than to rouse all the northern powers to arms  
In aid of Flanders' freedom.

FERIA.

Was it so ?

ALVA.

There is, besides, appended to these letters,  
'The full concerted plan of all the war,  
Which is to disunite from Spain's control,  
The Netherlands for ever. Nought omitted—  
The power and opposition close compared ;  
All the resources accurately noted,  
Together with the maxims to be followed,  
And all the treaties which they should conclude.  
The plan is fiendish, but 'tis no less splend.

FERIA.

The deep designing traitor !

ALVA.

And, moreover,  
There is allusion made, in these same letters,  
'To some mysterious conference, the Prince  
Must with his mother hold, upon the eve  
Preceding his departure.

FERIA.

That must be

This very day.

ALVA.

At midnight. But for this  
I have already taken proper steps.  
You see the case is pressing. Not a moment  
's to be lost : open the Monarch's chamber.

FERIA.

Impossible ! All entrance is forbidden.

ALVA.

I'll open then myself—the increasing danger  
Must justify my boldness.

*[As he is on the point of approaching the door it opens.  
and the KING comes out.]*

FERIA.

'Tis himself !

## SCENE IX.

*The KING. The preceding.*

*[All are alarmed at his appearance, fall back, and let him pass through them. He appears to be in a waking dream like a sleep-walker. His dress and figure indicate the disorder caused by his late fainting. With slow steps he walks past the Grandees and looks at each with a fixed eye, but without recognising any of them. At last he stands still, wrapped in thought, his eyes fixed on the ground, till the emotions of his mind gradually express themselves in words.]*

KING.

Restore me back the dead! Yes, I must have him.

DOMINGO (*whispering to ALVA*).

Speak to him, Duke.

KING.

He died despising me!

Have him again I must—and make him think  
More nobly of me.

ALVA (*approaching with fear*).

Sire!

KING (*looking round the circle*).

Who speaks to me?

Have you forgotten who I am? Why not  
Upon your knees, before your King, ye creatures!  
Am I not still your King? I must command  
Submission from you. Do you all then slight me,  
Because one man despised me?

ALVA.

Gracious King!

No more of him: a new and mightier foe  
Arises in the bosom of your realm.

FERRA.

Prince Carlos——

KING.

Had a friend who died for him.—  
For him! With me, he might have shared an empire.—  
How he look'd down upon me!—From the throne,  
Kings look not down so proudly.—It was plain,  
How vain his conquest made him. His keen sorrow

Confess'd how great his loss.—Man weeps not so,  
 For aught that's perishable. O that he might  
 But live again! I'd give my Indies for it!  
 Omnipotence! thou bring'st no comfort to me:  
 Thou canst not stretch thine arm into the grave,  
 To rectify one little act, committed  
 With hasty rashness, 'gainst the life of man.  
 The dead return no more. Who dare affirm  
 That I am happy? In the tomb he dwells,  
 Who scorn'd to flatter me. What care I now  
 For all who live? One spirit, one free being,  
 And one alone, arose in all this age!  
 He died despising me!

ALVA.

Our lives are useless!  
 Spaniards, let's die at once! E'en in the grave  
 This man still robs us of our Monarch's heart.

KING. (*sits down and leans his head on his arm*).

O! had he died for me! I loved him, too,  
 And much. Dear to me was he as a son.  
 In his young mind, there brightly rose for me  
 A new and beauteous morning. Who can say  
 What I had destined for him? He to me  
 Was a first love. All Europe may condemn me,  
 Europe may overwhelm me with its curse,  
 But I deserved his thanks

DOMINGO.

What spell is this?

KING.

And, say, for whom did he desert me thus?  
 A boy.—my son? O no, believe it not!  
 A Posa would not perish for a boy:  
 The scanty flame of friendship could not fill  
 A Posa's heart. It beat for human kind.  
 His passion was the world, and the whole court  
 Of future generations yet unborn.  
 To do them service, he secured a throne—  
 And lost it. Such high treason 'gainst mankind  
 Could Posa e'er forgive himself? O no;  
 I know his feelings better. Not, that he  
 Carlos preferred to Philip, but the youth—

The tender pupil,—to the aged Monarch.  
 The father's evening sunbeam could not ripen  
 His novel projects. He reserved for this,  
 The young son's orient rays. O 'tis undoubted,  
 They wait for my decease.

ALVA.

And of your thoughts,  
 Read in these letters, strongest confirmation.

KING.

'Tis possible he may miscalculate.  
 I'm still myself. Thanks, Nature, for thy gifts ;  
 I feel, within my frame, the strength of youth :  
 I'll turn their schemes to mockery His virtue  
 Shall be an empty dream—his death, a fool's.  
 His fall shall crush his friend and age together.  
 We'll test it now—how they can do without me?  
 The world is still, for one short evening, mine.  
 And this same evening, will I so employ,  
 That no reformer, yet to come, shall reap  
 Another harvest, in the waste I'll leave,  
 For ten long generations after me.—  
 He would have offer'd me a sacrifice  
 To his new deity—Humanity!  
 So on Humanity I'll take revenge.—  
 And with his puppet I'll at once commence.

[To the DUKE ALVA.

What you have now to tell me of the Prince,  
 Repeat. What tidings do these letters bring?

ALVA.

These letters, Sir, contain the last bequest  
 Of Posa to Prince Carlos.

KING (*reads the papers, watched by all present. He then lays  
 them aside and walks in silence up and down the room*).

Summon straight

The Cardinal Inquisitor ; and beg  
 He will bestow an hour upon the King.  
 This very night !

TAXIS.

Just on the stroke of two  
 The horses must be ready and prepared,  
 At the Carthusian monastery.

ALVA.

Spies

Despatch'd by me, moreover, have observed  
Equipments at the convent for a journey,  
On which the prince's arms were recognised.

FERIA.

And it is rumour'd that large sums are raised  
In the Queen's name, among the Moorish agents,  
Destined for Brussels.

KING.

Where is Carlos now ?

ALVA.

With Posa's body.

KING.

Are there lights as yet ,  
Within the Queen's apartment ?

ALVA.

Every thing

Is silent there. She has dismiss'd her maids,  
Far earlier than as yet has been her custom.  
The Duchess of Arcos, who last was with her,  
Left her in soundest sleep.

*[An Officer of the Body Guard enters, takes the DUKE OF FERIA aside, and whispers to him. The latter, struck with surprise, turns to DUKE ALVA. The others crowd round him, and a murmuring noise arises.]*

FERIA, TAXIS, and DOMINGO (at the same time).

'Tis wonderful !

KING.

What is the matter ?

FERIA.

News scarce credible !

DOMINGO.

Two soldiers, who have just return'd from duty,  
Report—but—O the tale 's ridiculous !

KING.

What do they say ?

ALVA.

They say, in the left wing

Of the Queen's palace, that the Emperor's ghost  
 Appear'd before them, and with solemn gait  
 Pass'd on This rumour is confirm'd by all  
 The sentinels, who through the whole pavilion  
 Their watches keep. And they, moreover, add,  
 The phantom in the Queen's apartment vanish'd.

KING.

And in what shape appeared it?

OFFICER.

In the robes,  
 The same attire, he in Saint Justi wore  
 For the last time, apparell'd as a monk.

KING.

A monk! And did the sentries know his person,  
 Whilst he was yet alive? They could not else  
 Determine that it was the Emperor.

OFFICER.

The sceptre which he bore, was evidence  
 It was the Emperor.

DOMINGO.

And the story goes,  
 He often has been seen in this same dress.

KING.

Did no one speak to him?

OFFICER.

No person dared.  
 The sentries pray'd, and let him pass in silence.

KING.

The phantom vanish'd in the Queen's apartments!

OFFICER.

In the Queen's antechamber *[General silence.]*

KING *(turns quickly round).*

What say you?

ALVA.

Sire! we are silent.

KING *(after some thought, to the OFFICER).*

Let my guards be ready,  
 And under arms, and order all approach  
 To that wing of the palace, to be stopp'd.  
 I fain would have a word with this same ghost.

*[Exit OFFICER.—Enter a PAGE.]*

PAGE.

The Cardinal Inquisitor.

KING (*to all present*).

Retire!

[*The CARDINAL INQUISITOR, an old man of ninety, and blind, enters, supported on a staff, and led by two Dominicans. The Grandees fall on their knees as he passes, and touch the hem of his garment. He gives them his blessing, and they depart.*

SCENE X.

*The KING and the GRAND INQUISITOR.*

*A long silence.*

GRAND INQUISITOR.

Say, do I stand before the King?

KING.

You do.

GRAND INQUISITOR.

I never thought it would be so again!

KING.

I now renew the scenes of early youth,  
When Philip sought his sage instructor's counsel.

GRAND INQUISITOR.

Your glorious sire, my pupil, Charles the Fifth,  
Nor sought or needed counsel at my hands.

KING.

So much the happier he! I, Cardinal,  
Am guilty of a murder, and no rest—

GRAND INQUISITOR.

What was the reason for this murder?

KING.

'Twas

A fraud unparallel'd——

GRAND INQUISITOR.

I know it all.

KING.

What do you know? Thro' whom, and since what time?

GRAND INQUISITOR.

For years—what you have only learn'd since sunset

KING (*with astonishment*).

You knew this man then!

GRAND INQUISITOR.

All his life is noted,  
From its commencement, to its sudden close,  
In Santa Casa's holy registers.

KING.

Yet he enjoy'd his liberty!

GRAND INQUISITOR.

The chain

With which he struggled, but which held him bound,  
'Tho' long, was firm, nor easy to be sever'd.

KING.

He has already been beyond the kingdom.

GRAND INQUISITOR.

Where'er he travell'd I was at his side.

KING (*walks backwards and forwards in displeasure*).

You knew the hands, then, I had fallen into;  
And yet delay'd to warn me!

GRAND INQUISITOR.

This rebuke

I pay you back. Why did you not consult us,  
Before you sought the arms of such a man?  
You knew him: one sole glance unmask'd him to you.  
Why did you rob the Office of its victim?  
Are we thus trifled with! When Majesty  
Can stoop to such concealment, and in secret,  
Behind our backs, league with our enemies,  
What must our fate be then? If one be spared,  
What plea can justify the fate of thousands?

KING.

But he, no less, has fallen a sacrifice.

GRAND INQUISITOR.

No: he is murder'd—basely, foully murder'd.  
The blood that should so gloriously have flow'd  
To honour us, has stain'd the assassin's hand.  
What claim had you to touch our sacred rights?  
He but existed, by our hands to perish.  
God gave him to this age's exigence,  
To perish, as a terrible example,  
And turn high vaunting reason into shame.



Such was my long-laid plan—behold, destroy'd  
In one brief hour—the toil of many years.  
We are defrauded, and your only gain  
Is bloody hands

KING.

Passion impell'd me to it

Forgive me !

GRAND INQUISITOR.

Passion ! And does royal Philip  
Thus answer me ? Have I alone grown old ?

*[Shaking his head angrily.]*

Passion ! Make conscience free within your realms,  
If you're a slave yourself.

KING.

In things like this  
I'm but a novice. Bear in patience with me.

GRAND INQUISITOR.

No, I'm ill pleased with you—to see you thus  
Tarnish the bygone glories of your reign.  
Where is that Philip, whose unchanging soul,  
Fix'd as the polar star, in Heaven above,  
Round its own axis, still pursued its course.  
Is all the memory of preceding years  
For ever gone ? And did the world become  
New moulded, when you stretch'd your hand to *him* ?  
Was poison no more poison ? Did distinction  
"Twixt good and evil—truth and falsehood—vanish ?  
What then is resolution, what is firmness,  
What is the faith of man, if in one weak,  
Unguarded hour, the rules of three-score years  
Dissolve in air, like woman's fickle favour ?

KING.

I look'd into his eyes. O pardon me  
This weak relapse into mortality !  
The world has one less access to your heart—  
Your eyes are sunk in night.

GRAND INQUISITOR.

What did this man  
Want with you ? What new thing could he adduce,  
You did not know before ? And are you versed

So ill, with fanatics and innovators?  
 Does the Reformer's vaunting language sound  
 So novel to your ears? If the firm edifice  
 Of your conviction totters to mere words,  
 Should you not shudder to subscribe the fate  
 Of many thousand poor deluded souls,  
 Who mount the flaming pile, for nothing worse?

KING.

I sought a human being. These Domingos——

GRAND INQUISITOR.

How! human beings! What are they to you?  
 Cyphers to count withal—no more! Alas!  
 And must I now repeat the elements  
 Of kingly knowledge, to my gray-hair'd pupil?  
 An earthly god must learn to bear the want  
 Of what may be denied him. When you whine  
 For sympathy, is not the world your equal?  
 What rights should you possess above your equals?

KING (*throwing himself into a chair*).

I'm a mere suffering mortal—that I feel—  
 And you demand from me, a wretched creature,  
 What the Creator only can perform.

GRAND INQUISITOR.

No, Sir! I am not thus to be deceived.  
 I see you through. You would escape from us  
 The Church's heavy chains press'd hard upon you—  
 You would be free, and claim your independence.

*He pauses. The KING is silent.*

We are avenged. Be thankful to the Church,  
 That checks you, with the kindness of a mother.  
 The erring choice, you were allow'd to make,  
 Has proved your punishment. You stand reprov'd!  
 Now, you may turn to us again. And know,  
 If I, this day, had not been summon'd here,  
 By Heaven above! before to-morrow's sun,  
 You would, yourself, have stood at my tribunal!

KING.

Forbear this language, Priest! Restrain thyself.  
 I'll not endure it from thee! In such tones,  
 No tongue shall speak to me.

## GRAND INQUISITOR.

Then why, O King!  
Call up the ghost of Samuel?—I've anointed  
Two monarchs to the throne of Spain. I hoped  
To leave behind, a firm-establish'd work.  
I see the fruit of all my life is lost.  
Don Philip's hands have shatter'd what I built.  
But tell me, Sire, wherefore have I been summon'd?  
What do I here?—I am not minded, King,  
To seek such interviews again.

KING.

But one—  
One service more—the last—and then in peace  
Depart. Let all the past be now forgotten—  
Let peace be made between us. We are friends.

GRAND INQUISITOR.

When Philip bends with due humility.

KING (*after a pause*).

My son is meditating treason.

GRAND INQUISITOR.

Well!

And what do you resolve?

KING.

On all, or nothing.

GRAND INQUISITOR

What mean you by this *all*?

KING.

He must escape,

Or die.

GRAND INQUISITOR.

Well, Sire! decide.

KING.

And can you not

Establish some new creed to justify  
The bloody murder of one's only son?

GRAND INQUISITOR.

To appease eternal justice, God's own Son  
Expired upon the cross.

KING.

And can you spread  
This creed throughout all Europe?

GRAND INQUISITOR.

Ay, as far

As the true cross is worshipp'd.

KING.

But I sin—

Sin against nature. Canst thou, by thy power,  
Silence her mighty voice.

GRAND INQUISITOR.

The voice of nature

Avails not over faith.

KING.

My right to judge

I place within your hands. Can I retrace  
The step once taken?

GRAND INQUISITOR.

Give him up to me!

KING.

My only son!—For whom then have I labour'd?

GRAND INQUISITOR.

For the grave rather than for liberty!

KING (*rising up*).

We are agreed. Come with me.

GRAND INQUISITOR.

Monarch! Whither?

KING.

From his own father's hands, to take the victim.

[*Leads him away.*]

## SCENE XI.

*Queen's Apartment.*CARLOS. *The QUEEN. Afterwards the KING and Attendants.*CARLOS *in Monk's attire, a mask over his face, which he is just taking off: under his arm a naked sword. It is quite dark. He approaches a door, which is in the act of opening. The QUEEN comes out in her night-dress with a lighted candle. CARLOS falls on one knee before her.*

CARLOS.

Elizabeth!

QUEEN (*regarding him with silent sorrow*).

Do we thus meet again?

CARLOS.

'Tis thus we meet again !

[*A silence.*]QUEEN (*endeavouring to collect herself*).

Carlos, arise !

We must not now unnerve each other thus.  
The mighty dead will not be honour'd now  
By fruitless tears. Tears are for petty sorrows !  
He gave himself for thee ! With his dear life,  
He purchased thine. And shall this precious blood  
Flow for a mere delusion of the brain ?  
O, Carlos, I have pledged myself for thee.  
On that assurance, did he flee from hence  
More satisfied. O do not falsify  
My word.

CARLOS (*with animation*).

To him I'll raise a monument  
Nobler than ever honour'd proudest Monarch,  
And o'er his dust a paradise shall bloom !

QUEEN.

Thus did I hope to find thee ! This was still  
The mighty purpose of his death. On me  
Devolves the last fulfilment of his plans,  
And I will now fulfil my solemn oath.  
Yet one more legacy, your dying friend  
Bequeath'd to me. I pledged my word to him,  
And wherefore should I now conceal it from you ?  
To me did he resign his Carlos—I  
Defy suspicion, and no longer tremble  
Before mankind, but will for once assume  
The courage of a friend. My heart shall speak.  
He called our passion—virtue ! I believe him,  
And will my heart no longer——

CARLOS.

Hold, O Queen !

Long was I sunk in a delusive dream.  
I loved, but now I am at last awake :  
Forgotten be the past. Here are your letters,—  
Destroy my own. Fear nothing from my passion,  
It is extinct. A brighter flame now burns,  
And purifies my being. All my love

Lies buried in the grave.—No mortal wish  
Finds place within this bosom.

*[After a pause, taking her hand.*

I have come

To bid farewell to you, and I have learn'd,  
There is a higher, greater good, my mother,  
Than to call thee mine own. One rapid night  
Has wing'd the tardy progress of my years,  
And prematurely ripen'd me to manhood.  
I have no farther business in the world,  
But to remember him. My harvest now  
Is ended.

*[He approaches the QUEEN, who conceals her face.*

Mother! will you not reply?

QUEEN.

Carlos! regard not these my tears I cannot  
Restrain them. But believe me I admire you.—

CARLOS.

Thou wert the only partner of our league:  
And by this name, thou shalt remain to me  
The most beloved object in this world.  
No other woman can my friendship share,  
More than she yesterday could win my love.  
But sacred shall the royal widow be,  
Should Providence conduct me to the throne.

*[The KING, accompanied by the GRAND INQUISITOR,  
appears in the back-ground without being observed.*

I hasten to leave Spain, and never more  
Shall I behold my father, in this world.  
No more I love him.—Nature is extinct  
Within this breast. Be you again his wife—  
His son's for ever lost to him! Return  
Back to your course of duty—I must speed  
To liberate a people long oppress'd,  
From a fell tyrant's hand. Madrid shall hail  
Carlos as King, or ne'er behold him more.  
And now a long and last farewell——

*[He kisses her.*

QUEEN.

O Carlos!

How you exalt me! but, I dare not soar

To such a height of greatness :—yet I may  
Contemplate now your noble mind, with wonder.

CARLOS.

Am I not firm, Elizabeth ? I hold thee  
Thus in my arms and tremble not. The fear  
Of instant death had, yesterday, not torn me  
From this dear spot. *[He leaves her.]*

All that is over now,  
And I defy my mortal destinies.  
I've held thee in these arms and waver'd not.  
Hark ! Heard you nothing ? *[A clock strikes.]*

QUEEN.

Nothing but the bell  
That tolls the moment of our separation.

CARLOS.

Good night, then, mother ! And you shall, from Ghent,  
Receive a letter, which will first proclaim  
Our secret enterprise aloud I go  
To dare King Philip to an open contest.  
Henceforth there shall be nought conceal'd between us !  
You need not shun the aspect of the world.  
Be this my last deceit.

*About to take up the mask—the KING stands between them.*

KING.

It is thy last !

*[The QUEEN falls senseless.]*

CARLOS (*hastens to her and supports her in his arms*).

Is the Queen dead ? Great Heavens !

KING (*coolly and quietly to the GRAND INQUISITOR*).

Lord Cardinal !

I've done *my* part. Go now, and do your own. *[Exit.]*

END OF DON CARLOS.





# MARY STUART

A TRAGEDY.

# DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ELIZABETH, *Queen of England.*

MARY STUART, *Queen of Scots, a Prisoner in England.*

ROBERT DUDLEY, *Earl of Leicester.*

GEORGE TALBOT, *Earl of Shrewsbury.*

WILLIAM CECIL, *Lord Burleigh, Lord High Treasurer.*

*Earl of Kent.*

SIR WILLIAM DAVISON, *Secretary of State.*

SIR AMIAS PAULET, *Keeper of MARY.*

SIR EDWARD MORTIMER, *his Nephew.*

COUNT L'AUBESPINE, *the French Ambassador.*

COUNT BELLIEVRE, *Envoy Extraordinary from France.*

O'KELLY, *Mortimer's Friend.*

SIR DRUE DRURY, *another Keeper of MARY.*

SIR ANDREW MELVIL, *her House-Steward.*

BURGOYNE, *her Physician.*

HANNAH KENNEDY, *her Nurse.*

MARGARET CURL, *her Attendant.*

*Sheriff of the County.*

*Officer of the Guard.*

*French and English Lords.*

*Soldiers.*

*Servants of State, belonging to ELIZABETH.*

*Servants and Female Attendants of the Queen of Scots.*

# MARY STUART.

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## ACT I.

### SCENE I.

*A common Apartment in the Castle of Fotheringay.*

HANNAH KENNEDY contending violently with PAULET, who is about to break open a closet; DRURY with an iron crow.

KEN. . Now now, Sir? What fresh outrage have we here?  
Back from that cabinet!

PAULET. Whence came the jewel?  
I know 'twas from an upper chamber thrown;  
And you would bribe the gard'ner with your trinkets.  
A curse on woman's wiles! In spite of all  
My strict precaution and my active search,  
Still treasures here, still costly gems concealed!  
And doubtless there are more where this lay hid.

*[Advancing towards the cabinet.]*

KEN. Intruder, back! here lie my lady's secrets.

PAUL. Exactly what I seek. *[Drawing forth papers.]*

KENNEDY. Mere trifling papers;

The amusements only of an idle pen,  
To cheat the dreary tedium of a dungeon.

PAUL. . In idle hours the evil mind is busy.

KEN. . Those writings are in French.

PAULET. . So much the worse!

That tongue betokens England's enemy.

KEN. . Sketches of letters to the Queen of England.

PAUL. . I'll be their bearer. Ha! what glitters here?

*[He touches a secret spring, and draws out jewels from a private drawer.]*

A royal diadem enriched with stones,  
And studded with the fleur-de-lis of France!

*[He hands it to his Assistant.]*

Here, take it, Drury, lay it with the rest.

[*Exit* DRURY.]

[ And ye have found the means to hide from us  
Such costly things, and screen them, until now,  
From our inquiring eyes ? ]

KENNEDY.

O insolent

And tyrant power, to which we must submit!

PAUL. . She can work ill as long as she hath treasures ;  
For all things turn to weapons in her hands.

KENNEDY (*supplicating*).

O Sir ! be merciful ; deprive us not  
Of the last jewel that adorns our life !

'Tis my poor Lady's only joy to view

This symbol of her former majesty.

Your hands long since have robbed us of the rest.

PAUL. . 'Tis in safe custody ; in proper time

'Twill be restored to you with scrupulous care.

KEN. . Who that beholds these naked walls could say  
That Majesty dwelt here ? Where is the throne ?  
Where the imperial canopy of state ?

Must she not set her tender foot, still used

To softest treading, on the rugged ground ?

With common pewter, which the lowliest dame

Would scorn, they furnish forth her homely table.

PAUL. Thus did she treat her spouse at Stirling once ;

And pledged, the while, her paramour in gold.

KEN. . Even the mirror's trifling aid withheld.

PAUL. . The contemplation of her own vain image

Incites to hope, and prompts to daring deeds.

KEN. . Books are denied her to divert her mind.

PAUL. . The Bible still is left, to mend her heart.

KEN. . Even of her very lute she is deprived !

PAUL. . Because she tuned it to her wanton airs.

KEN. . Is this a fate for her, the gentle born,

Who in her very cradle was a Queen ;

Who, rear'd in Catherine's luxurious court,

Enjoyed the fulness of each earthly pleasure ?

Was't not enough to rob her of her power,

Must ye then envy her its paltry tinsel ?

A noble heart in time resigns itself

To great calamities with fortitude ;

But yet it cuts one to the soul, to part  
At once with all life's little outward trappings!

PAUL. . These are the things that turn the human heart  
To vanity, which should collect itself  
In penitence ;—for a lewd, vicious life,  
Want and abasement are the only penance.

KEN. . If youthful blood has led her into error,  
With her own heart and God she must account :—  
There is no judge in England over her.

PAUL. . She shall have judgment where she hath transgress'd.

KEN. . Her narrow bonds restrain her from transgression.

PAUL. . And yet she found the means to stretch her arm  
Into the world, from out these narrow bonds,  
And, with the torch of civil war, inflame  
This realm against our Queen, (whom' God preserve,)  
And arm assassin bands. Did she not rouse  
From out these walls the malefactor Parry,  
And Babington, to the detested crime  
Of regicide? And did this iron grate  
Prevent her from decoying to her toils  
The virtuous heart of Norfolk? Saw we not  
The first, best head, in all this island fall  
A sacrifice for her upon the block?  
[ The noble house of Howard fell with him.]  
And did this sad example terrify  
These mad adventurers, whose rival zeal  
Plunges for her into this deep abyss?  
The bloody scaffold bends beneath the weight  
Of her new daily victims; and we ne'er  
Shall see an end till she herself, of all  
The guiltiest, be offer'd up upon it.  
O! curses on the day when England took  
This Helen to its hospitable arms.

KEN. . Did England then receive her hospitably?  
O hapless Queen! who, since that fatal day  
When first she set her foot within this realm,  
And, as a suppliant—a fugitive—  
Came to implore protection from her sister,  
Has been condemned, despite the law of nations,  
And royal privilege, to weep away  
The fairest years of youth in prison walls.

And now, when she hath suffer'd every thing  
Which in imprisonment is hard and bitter,  
Is like a felon summoned to the bar,  
Fouly accused, and though herself a queen.  
Constrained to plead for honour and for life.

PAUL. . She came amongst us as a murderess,  
Chased by her very subjects from a throne  
Which she had oft by vilest deeds disgrac'd.  
Sworn against England's welfare came she hitler,  
To call the times of bloody Mary back,  
Betray our Church to Romish tyranny,  
And sell our dear-bought liberties to France.  
Say, why disdain'd she to subscribe the treaty  
Of Edinborough—to resign her claim  
To England's crown—and with one single word,  
Trac'd by her pen, throw wide her prison gates?  
No:—she had rather live in vile confinement,  
And see herself ill-treated, than renounce  
The empty honours of her barren title.  
Why acts she thus? Because she trusts to wiles,  
And treacherous arts of base conspiracy;  
And, hourly plotting schemes of mischief, hopes  
To conquer, from her prison, all this isle.

KEN. . You mock us, Sir, and edge your cruelty  
With words of bitter scorn:—that *she* should form  
Such projects; *she*, who 's here immured alive,  
To whom no sound of comfort, not a voice  
Of friendship comes from her beloved home;  
Who hath so long no human face beheld,  
Save her stern gaoler's unrelenting brows:  
Till now, of late, in your uncourteous cousin  
She sees a second keeper, and beholds  
Fresh bolts and bars around her multiplied.

PAUL. . No iron-grate is proof against her wiles.  
How do I know these bars are not fil'd through?  
How that this floor, these walls, that seem so strong  
Without, may not be hollow from within,  
And let in felon treach'ry when I sleep?  
Accursed office, that's intrusted to me,  
To guard this cunning mother of all ill!  
Fear scares me from my sleep; and in the night

I, like a troubled spirit, roam and try  
 The strength of every bolt, and put to proof  
 Each guard's fidelity:—I see, with fear,  
 The dawning of each morn, which may confirm  
 My apprehensions:—yet, thank God, there's hope  
 That all my fears will soon be at an end;  
 For rather would I at the gates of hell  
 Stand sentinel, and guard the dev'lish host  
 Of damned souls, than this deceitful Queen.

KEN. . Here comes the Queen.

PAULET. Christ's image in her hand,  
 Pride, and all worldly lusts within her heart.

# SCENE II.

*The same. Enter MARY veiled, a crucifix in her hand.*

KENNEDY (*hastening towards her*).

O gracious Queen! they tread us under foot;  
 No end of tyranny and base oppression;  
 Each coming day heaps fresh indignities,  
 New sufferings on thy royal head.

MARY. Be calm—  
 Say, what has happened?

KENNEDY. See! thy cabinet  
 Is forc'd;—thy papers,—and thy only treasure,  
 Which with such pains we had secur'd, the last  
 Poor remnant of thy bridal ornaments  
 From France, is in his hands:—nought now remains  
 Of royal state—thou art indeed bereft!

MARY. Compose yourself, my Hannah! and believe me,  
 'Tis not these baubles which can make a queen:—  
 Basely indeed they may behave to us,  
 But they cannot debase us. I have learnt  
 To use myself to many a change in England;  
 I can support this too. Sir, you have ta'en  
 By force, what I this very day designed  
 To have deliver'd to you. There's a letter  
 Amongst these papers, for my royal sister  
 Of England—Pledge me, Sir, your word of honour;  
 To give it to her majesty's own hands,  
 And not to the deceitful care of Burleigh.

PAUL. . I shall consider what is best to do.

MARY. Sir, you shall know its import. In this letter  
I beg a favour, a great favour of her,—  
That she herself will give me audience,—she!  
Whom I have never seen. I have been summon'd  
Before a court of men, whom I can ne'er  
Acknowledge as my peers—of men to whom  
My heart denies its confidence. The Queen  
Is of my family, my rank, my sex;  
To her alone—a sister, queen, and woman—  
Can I unfold my heart.

PAULET. Too oft, my Lady,  
Have you entrusted both your fate and honour  
To men less worthy your esteem than these.

MARY. I, in the letter, beg another favour,  
And surely nought but inhumanity  
Can here reject my prayer. These many years  
Have I, in prison, miss'd the church's comfort,  
The blessing of the sacraments:—and she  
Who robs me of my freedom and my crown,  
Who seeks my very life, can never wish  
To shut the gates of heaven upon my soul.

PAUL. . Whene'er you wish, the Dean shall wait upon you.

MARY (*interrupting him sharply*).

Talk to me not of Deans. I ask the aid  
Of one of my own church—a Catholic priest.

PAUL. . [That is against the publish'd laws of England.

MARY. The laws of England are no rule for me.  
I am not England's subject; I have ne'er  
Consented to its laws, and will not bow  
Before their cruel and despotic sway.  
If 'tis your will, to the unheard-of rigour  
Which I have borne, to add this new oppression,  
I must submit to what your power ordains;—  
Yet will I raise my voice in loud complaints.]  
I also wish a public notary,  
And secretaries, to prepare my will—  
My sorrows, and my prison's wretchedness  
Prey on my life—my days, I fear, are number'd—  
I feel that I am near the gates of death.

PAUL. . These serious contemplations well become you.

MARY. And know I then, that some too ready hand



May not abridge this tedious work of sorrow?  
I would indite my will, and make disposal  
Of what belongs to me.

PAUL. . . . . This liberty  
May be allow'd to you, for England's Queen  
Will not enrich herself by plundering you.

MARY. I have been parted from my faithful women,  
And from my servants;—tell me, where are they?  
What is their fate? I can indeed dispense  
At present with their service, but my heart  
Will feel rejoiced to know these faithful ones  
Are not exposed to suff'ring and to want!

**PAUL.** . Your servants have been cared for; [ and again  
You shall behold whate'er is taken from you :  
And all shall be restored in proper season. ] [*Going.*

MARY. And will you leave my presence thus again,  
And not relieve my fearful anxious heart  
From the fell torments of uncertainty?  
Thanks to the vigilance of your hateful spies,  
I am divided from the world ;—no voice  
Can reach me through these prison-walls ;—my fate  
Lies in the hands of those who wish my ruin.  
A month of dread suspense is pass'd already,  
Since when the forty high commissioners  
Surprised me in this castle, and erected,  
With most unseemly haste, their dread tribunal ;  
They forced me, stunn'd, amaz'd, and unprepar'd,  
Without an advocate, from memory,  
Before their unexampled court, to answer  
Their weighty charges artfully arranged.  
—They came like ghosts—like ghosts they disappeared,  
And since that day all mouths are clos'd to me.  
In vain I seek to construe from your looks  
Which hath prevail'd—my cause's innocence  
And my friends' zeal—or my foes' cursed counsel.  
O ! break this silence—let me know the worst—  
What I have still to fear, and what to hope.

**PAUL. . Close your accounts with heaven.**

MARY. From heaven I hope  
For mercy, Sir;—and from my earthly judges  
I hope, and still expect, the strictest justice.

PAUL. . Justice, depend upon it, will be done you.

MARY. Is the suit ended, Sir?

PAULET. I cannot tell

MARY. Am I condemn'd?

PAUL. . I cannot answer, Lady.

MARY. [ Sir, a good work fears not the light of day.

PAUL. . The day will shine upon it, doubt it not.]

MARY. Despatch is here the fashion. Is it meant  
'The murderer shall surpriso me, like the judges?

PAUL. . Still entertain that thought, and he will find you  
Better prepared to meet your fate than they did.

MARY (*after a pause*).

Sir, nothing can surprise me, which a court,  
Inspired by Burleigh's hate and Hatton's zeal,  
Howe'er unjust, may venture to pronounce:—  
But I have yet to learn, how far the Queen  
Will dare in execution of the sentence.

PAUL. . The sovereigns of England have no fear  
But for their conscience, and their parliament.  
What justice hath decreed, her fearless hand  
Will execute before th' assembled world.

### SCENE III.

*The same.* MORTIMER enters, and without paying attention to  
the QUEEN, addresses PAULET

MORT. Uncle, you're sought for

| *He retires in the same manner* The QUEEN re-  
marks it, and turns towards PAULET, who is  
about to follow him.

MARY. Sir, one favour more:—

If you have aught to say to me—from you  
I can bear much—I reverence your grey hairs—  
But cannot bear that young man's insolence;—  
Spare me in future his unmanner'd rudeness.

PAUL. . I prize him most for that which makes you hate him:—  
He is not, truly, one of those poor fools  
Who melt before a woman's treacherous tears.  
He has seen much—has been to Rheims and Paris,  
And brings us back his true old English heart.  
Lady, your cunning arts are lost on him. [*Exit.*

## SCENE IV

MARY, KENNEDY.

KEN. . And dares the ruffian venture to your face  
Such language!—O, 'tis hard—'tis past endurance.

MARY (*lost in reflection*).

In the fair moments of our former splendour  
We lent to flatt'ers a too willing ear;—  
It is but just, good Hannah, we should now  
Be forced to hear the bitter voice of censure.

KEN. . So downcast, so depressed, my dearest Lady!  
You, who before so gay, so full of hope,  
Were used to comfort me in my distress?  
More gracious were the task to check your mirth  
Than chide your heavy sadness.

MARY. Well I know him—

, It is the bleeding Darnley's royal shade,  
Rising in anger from his darksome grave:  
And never will he make his peace with me  
Until the measure of my woes be full.

KEN. . What thoughts are these—

MARY. Thou may'st forget it, Hannah;

But I've a faithful mem'ry—'tis this day  
Another wretched anniversary  
Of that regretted, that unhappy deed—  
Which I must celebrate with fast and penance.

KEN. . Dismiss at length in peace this evil spirit.  
The penitence of many a heavy year,  
Of many a suffering, has atoned the deed:  
The church, which holds the key of absolution,  
Pardons the crime, and heav'n itself's appeas'd.

MARY. This long atoned crime arises fresh  
And bleeding from its lightly cover'd grave—  
My husband's restless spirit seeks revenge—  
No sacred bell can exorcise, no host  
In priestly hands dismiss it to his tomb.

KEN. You did not murder him—'twas done by others.

MARY. But it was known to me;—I suffer'd it,  
And lured him with my smiles to death's embrace.

KEN. Your youth extenuates your guilt. You were  
Of tender years.

MARY.                               So tender, yet I drew  
This heavy guilt upon my youthful head.

KEN. . You were provok'd by direst injuries,  
And by the rude presumption of the man,  
Whom out of darkness, like the hand of heav'n,  
Your love drew forth, and raised above all others :  
Whom through your bridal chamber you conducted  
Up to your throne, and with your lovely self,  
And your hereditary crown, distinguish'd :—  
[ Your work was his existence, and your grace  
Bedew'd him like the gentle rains of heav'n. ]  
Could he forget, that his so splendid lot  
Was the creation of your gen'rous love?  
Yet did he, worthless as he was, forget it.  
With base suspicions, and with brutal manners,  
He wearied your affections, and became  
An object to you of deserv'd disgust :—  
Th' illusion, which till now had overcast  
Your judgment, vanish'd ; angrily you fled  
His foul embrace, and gave him up to scorn.  
And did he seek again to win your love?  
Your favour ? Did he e'er implore your pardon ?  
Or fall in deep repentance at your feet ?  
No ; the base wretch defied you :—he, who was  
Your bounty's creature, wish'd to play your king,  
[ And strove, through fear, to force your inclination. ]  
Before your eyes he had your fav'rite singer,  
Poor Rizzio, murder'd : you did but avenge  
With blood, the bloody deed——

MARY.   And bloodily,  
I fear, too soon 'twill be aveng'd on me :—  
You seek to comfort me, and you condemn me.

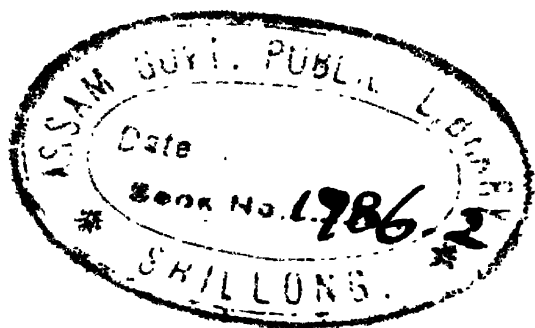
KEN. . . You were, when you consented to this deed,  
No more yourself—belong'd not to yourself—  
The madness of a frantic love possess'd you,  
And bound you to a terrible seducer,  
The wretched Bothwell. That despotic man  
Rul'd you with shameful, overbearing will,  
And with his philters and his hellish arts  
Inflamed your passions.

MARY.   All the arts he used  
Were man's superior strength, and woman's weakness.



Louise

Handliff



KEN. . . No, no, I say. The most pernicious spirits  
Of hell he must have summoned to his aid,  
To cast this mist before your waking senses.  
Your ear no more was open to the voice  
Of friendly warning, and your eyes were shut  
To decency; soft female bashfulness  
Deserted you; those cheeks, which were before  
The seat of virtuous blushing modesty,  
Glow'd with the flames of unrestrain'd desire:  
You cast away the veil of secrecy,  
And the flagitious daring of the man  
O'ercame your natural coyness: you expos'd  
Your shame, unblushingly, to public gaze:  
You let the murd'rer, whom the people follow'd  
With curses, through the streets of Edinburgh,  
Before you bear the royal sword of Scotland  
In triumph. You begirt your parliament  
With armed bands; and by this shameless farce,  
There, in the very temple of great Justice,  
You forc'd the judges of the land to clear  
The murderer of his guilt. You went still farther—  
O God!

MARY. Conclude—nay, pause not—say for this  
I gave my hand in marriage at the altar.

KEN. . . O let an everlasting silence veil  
That dreadful deed: the heart revolts at it,  
A crime to stain the darkest criminal!  
Yet you are no such lost one, that I know.  
I nurs'd your youth myself—your heart is fram'd  
For tender softness: 'tis alive to shame,  
And all your fault is thoughtless levity.  
Yes, I repeat it, there are evil spirits,  
Who sudden fix in man's unguarded breast  
Their fatal residence, and there delight  
To act their dev'lish deeds; then hurry back  
Unto their native hell, and leave behind  
Remorse and horror in the poison'd bosom.  
Since this misdeed, which blackens thus your life,  
You have done nothing ill; your conduct has  
Been pure; myself can witness your amendment.  
Take courage, then; with your own heart make peace.

Whatever cause you have for penitence,  
 You are not guilty here. Nor England's Queen,  
 Nor England's parliament can be your judge.  
 Here *might* oppresses you: you may present  
 Yourself before this self-created court  
 With all the fortitude of innocence.

MARY. I hear a step.

KENNEDY. It is the nephew—In.

SCENE V.

*The same. Enter MORTIMER, approaching cautiously.*

MORTIMER (to KENNEDY).

Step to the door, and keep a careful watch,  
 I have important business with the Queen.

MARY (*with dignity*).

I charge thee, Hannah, go not hence—remain.

MORT. Fear not, my gracious Lady—learn to know me.

[*He gives her a card.*]

MARY. [*She examines it, and starts back astonished.*]

Heav'n's! What is this?

MORTIMER (to KENNEDY). Retire, good Kennedy;

See that my uncle comes not unawares.

MARY (to KENNEDY, who hesitates, and looks at the QUEEN  
*inquiringly*).

Go in; do as he bids you.

[KENNEDY retires with signs of wonder.]

SCENE VI

MARY, MORTIMER.

MARY. From my uncle

In France—the worthy Card'nal of Lorraine?

[*She reads.*]

"Confide in Mortimer, who brings you this;  
 You have no truer, firmer friend in England."

[*Looking at him with astonishment.*]

Can I believe it? Is there no delusion  
 To cheat my senses? Do I find a friend  
 So near, when I conceiv'd myself abandon'd  
 By the whole world? And find that friend in you,  
 The nephew of my gaoler, whom I thought  
 My most invet'rate enemy?

MORTIMER (*kneeling*).

O pardon,



My gracious Liege, for the detested mask,  
Which it has cost me pain enough to wear;  
Yet through such means alone have I the pow'r  
To see you, and to bring you help and rescue.

MARY. Arise, Sir; you astonish me; I cannot  
So suddenly emerge from the abyss  
Of wretchedness to hope: let me conceive  
This happiness, that I may credit it.

MORT. Our time is brief: each moment I expect  
My uncle, whom a hated man attends:  
Hear, then, before his terrible commission  
Surprises you, how Heav'n prepares your rescue.

MARY. You come, in token of its wondrous pow'r.

MORT. Allow me of myself to speak.

MARY. Say on.

MORT. I scarce, my Liege, had numbered twenty years,  
Train'd in the path of strictest discipline,  
And nurs'd in deadliest hate to Papacy,  
When led by irresistible desire  
For foreign travel, I resolv'd to leave  
My country and its puritanic faith  
Far, far behind me: soon with rapid speed  
I flew through France, and bent my eager course  
On to the plains of far-famed Italy.  
'Twas then the time of the great Jubilee:—  
And crowds of palmers fill'd the public roads;  
Each image was adorn'd with garlands; 'twas  
As if all human-kind were wand'ring forth  
In pilgrimage towards the heav'nly kingdom.  
The tide of the believing multitude  
Bore me too onward with resistless force,  
Into the streets of Rome. What was my wonder,  
As the magnificence of stately columns  
Rush'd on my sight! the vast triumphal arches,  
The Colosseum's grandeur, with amazement  
Struck my admiring senses; the sublime  
Creative spirit held my soul a prisoner  
In the fair world of wonders it had fram'd.  
I ne'er had felt the power of art till now.  
The Church that rear'd me hates the charms of sense;

It tolerates no image, it adores  
 But the unseen, the incorporeal word.  
 What were my feelings, then, as I approach'd  
 The threshold of the churches, and within,  
 Heard heav'nly music floating in the air :  
 While from the walls and high-wrought roofs there  
                   stream'd

Crowds of celestial forms in endless train—  
 When the Most High, Most Glorious, pervaded  
 My captivated sense in real presence !  
 And when I saw the great and godlike visions,  
 The Salutation, the Nativity,  
 The Holy Mother, and the Trinity's  
 Descent, the luminous Transfiguration :  
 And last the holy Pontiff, clad in all  
 The glory of his office, bless the people !  
 O ! what is all the pomp of gold and jewels  
 With which the kings of earth adorn themselves !  
*He* is alone surrounded by the Godhead ;  
*His* mansion is in truth an heav'nly kingdom,  
 For not of earthly moulding are these forms !

MARY. O spare me, Sir ! No further. Spread no more  
 Life's verdant carpet out before my eyes,  
 Remember I am wretched, and a prisoner.

MORT. I was a prisoner too, my Queen : but swift  
 My prison-gates flew open, when at once  
 My spirit felt its liberty, and hail'd  
 'The smiling dawn of life. I learn'd to burst  
 Each narrow prejudice of education.  
 To crown my brows with never-fading wreaths,  
 And mix my joy with the rejoicing crowd.  
 Full many noble Scots, who saw my zeal,  
 Encourag'd me, and with the gallant French  
 They kindly led me to your princely uncle,  
 The Cardinal of Guise. O what a man !  
 How firm, how clear, how manly, and how great !  
 Born to control the human mind at will !  
 The very model of a royal priest ;  
 A ruler of the Church without an equal !

MARY. You've seen him then,—the much lov'd, honour'd man,

Who was the guardian of my tender years !  
O speak of him ! Does he remember me ?  
Does fortune favour him ? And prospers still  
His life ? And does he still majestic stand,  
A very rock and pillar of the Church ?

MORT. The holy man descended from his height,  
And deign'd to teach me the important creed  
Of the true Church. and dissipate my doubts.  
He show'd me, how the glimm'ring light of reason  
Serves but to lead us to eternal error :  
That what the heart is call'd on to believe,  
The eye must see : that he who rules the Church  
Must needs be visible ; and that the Spirit  
Of truth inspir'd the Councils of the Fathers.  
How vanish'd, then, the fond imaginings  
And weak conceptions of my childish soul  
Before his conquering judgment, and the soft  
Persuasion of his tongue ! So I return'd  
Back to the bosom of the holy Church,  
And at his feet abjur'd my heresies.

MARY. Then of those happy thousands, you are one,  
Whom he, with his celestial eloquence,  
Like the immortal preacher of the mount,  
Has turn'd, and led to everlasting joy !

MORT. The duties of his office call'd him soon  
To France, and I was sent by him to Rheims,  
Where, by the Jesuits' anxious labour, priests  
Are train'd to preach our holy faith in England.  
There, 'mongst the Scots, I found the noble Morgan,  
And your true Lesley, Ross's learned bishop,  
Who pass in France their joyless days of exile.  
I join'd with heartfelt zeal these worthy men,  
And fortified my faith. As I one day  
Roam'd through the Bishop's dwelling, I was struck  
With a fair female portrait ; it was full  
Of touching, wond'rous charms ; with magic might  
It mov'd my inmost soul, and there I stood  
Speechless, and overmaster'd by my feelings.  
" Well," cried the Bishop, " may you linger thus  
In deep emotion near this lovely face !  
For the most beautiful of womankind,

Is also matchless<sup>4</sup> in calamity.  
She is a prisoner for our holy faith,  
And in your native land, alas ! she suffers."

[*MARY is in great agitation.—He pauses.*

MARY. Excellent man ! All is not lost, indeed,  
While such a friend remains in my misfortunes !

MORT. Then he began, with moving eloquence,  
To paint the suff'rings of your martyrdom ;  
He showed me, then, your lofty pedigree,  
And your descent from Tudor's royal House.  
He prov'd to me that you alone have right  
To reign in England, not this upstart Queen,  
The base-born fruit of an adult'rous bed,  
Whom Henry's self rejected as a bastard.  
[ He from my eyes remov'd delusion's mist,  
And taught me to lament you as a victim,  
To honour you as my true Queen, whom I,  
Deceiv'd, like thousands of my noble fellows,  
Had ever hated as my country's foe. ]  
I would not trust his evidence alone ;  
I question'd learned doctors ; I consulted  
The most authentic books of heraldry ;  
And every man of knowledge, whom I ask'd,  
Confirm'd to me your claim's validity.  
And now I know that your undoubted right  
To England's throne has been your only wrong.  
This realm is justly yours by heritag<sup>e</sup>.  
In which you innocently pine as prisoner.

MARY. O this unhappy right !—'tis this alone  
Which is the source of all my sufferings.

MORT. Just at this time the tidings reached my ears,  
Of your removal from old Talbot's charge,  
And your committal to my uncle's care.  
It seem'd to me that this disposal mark'd  
The wondrous, outstretch'd hand of fav'ring Heaven :  
It seem'd to be a loud decree of fate,  
That it had chosen me to rescue you.  
My friends concur with me ; the Cardinal  
Bestows on me his counsel and his blessing,  
And tutors me in the hard task of feigning.  
The plan in haste digested, I commenced

My journey homewards, and ten days ago  
On England's shores I landed.—Oh, my Queen,  
[*He pauses.*

I saw then, not your picture, but yourself—  
Oh what a treasure do these walls enclose!  
No prison this, but the abode of gods,  
More splendid far than England's royal Court.  
Happy, thrice happy he, whose envied lot  
Permits to breathe the selfsame air with you!  
It is a prudent policy in her  
To bury you so deep! All England's youth  
Would rise at once in general mutiny,  
And not a sword lie quiet in its sheath:  
Rebellion would uprear its giant head,  
Through all this peaceful isle, if Britons once  
Beheld their captive Queen.

MARY. 'Twere well with her,

MORT. If ev'ry Briton saw her with your eyes!  
Were each, like me, a witness of your wrongs.  
Your meekness, and the noble fortitude  
With which you suffer these indignities—  
Would you not then emerge from all these trials  
Like a true Queen? Your prison's infamy,  
Hath it despoil'd your beauty of its charms?  
You are depriv'd of all that graces life,  
Yet round you life and light eternal beam.  
Ne'er on this threshold can I set my foot,  
That my poor heart with anguish is not torn,  
Not ravish'd with delight at gazing on you.  
Yet fearfully the fatal time draws near,  
And danger hourly growing presses on.  
I can delay no longer—can no more  
Conceal the dreadful news.—

MARY. My sentence then!

MORT. Is it pronounc'd? Speak freely—I can bear it.  
It is pronounc'd! The two-and-forty judges  
Have giv'n the verdict, "guilty;" and the Houses  
Of Lords and Commons, with the citizens  
Of London, eagerly and urgently  
Demand the execution of the sentence:—  
The Queen alone still craftily delays,

That she may be constrain'd to yield, but not  
From feelings of humanity or mercy.

MARY (*collected*).

Sir, I am not surpris'd, nor terrified.  
I have been long prepar'd for such a message.  
Too well I know my judges. After all  
Their cruel treatment I can well conceive  
They dare not now restore my liberty.  
I know their aim: they mean to keep me here  
In everlasting bondage, and to bury,  
In the sepulchral darkness of my prison,  
My vengeance with me, and my rightful claims.

MORT. O! no, my gracious Queen;—they stop not there:  
Oppression will not be content to do

Its work by halves:—as long as e'er you live,  
Distrust and fear will haunt the English Queen  
No dungeon can inter you deep enough;  
Your death alone can make her throne secure.

MARY. Will she then dare, regardless of the shame,  
Lay my crown'd head upon the fatal block?

MORT. She will most surely dare it, doubt it not.

MARY. And can she thus roll in the very dust,  
Her own, and ev'ry monarch's majesty?

MORT. She thinks on nothing now but present danger.  
Nor looks to that which is so far removed.

MARY. And fears she not the dread revenge of France?

MORT. With France she makes an everlasting peace;  
And gives to Anjou's Duke her throne and hand.

MARY. Will not the King of Spain rise up in arms?

MORT. She fears not a collected world in arms,  
If with her people she remain at peace.

MARY. Were this a spectacle for British eyes?

MORT. This land, my Queen, has, in these latter days,  
Seen many a royal woman from the throne  
Descend, and mount the scaffold:—her own mother,  
And Cath'rine Howard trod this fatal path:  
And was not Lady Grey a crowned head?

MARY (*after a pause*).

No, Mortimer, vain fears have blinded you;  
'Tis but the honest care of your true heart,  
Which conjures up these empty apprehensions.

It is not, Sir, the scaffold that I fear :  
There are so many still and secret means,  
By which her Majesty of England may  
Set all my claims to rest. O, trust me, ere  
An executioner is found for me,  
Assassins will be hir'd to do their work.  
'Tis that which makes me tremble, Mortimer :  
I never lift the goblet to my lips  
Without an inward shudd'ring, lest the draught  
May have been mingled by my sister's love.

MORT. No :—neither open nor disguised murder  
Shall e'er prevail against you :—fear no more ;  
All is prepar'd ;—twelve nobles of the land  
Are my confed'rates, and have pledg'd to-day,  
Upon the Sacrament, their faith to free you,  
With dauntless arm, from this captivity.

MARY. Count Aubespinc, the French Ambassador,  
Knows of our plot, and offers his assistance :  
'Tis in his palace that we hold our meetings.  
You make me tremble, Sir, but not for joy ;  
An evil boding penetrates my heart.  
Know you, then, what you risk ? Are you not scar'd  
By Babington and Tichburn's bloody heads,  
Set up as warnings upon London's bridge ?  
Nor by the ruin of those many victims  
Who have, in such attempts, found certain death,  
And only made my chains the heavier ?  
Fly hence, deluded, most unhappy youth !  
Fly, if there yet be time for you, before  
That crafty spy, Lord Burleigh, track your schemes,  
And mix his traitors in your secret plots.  
Fly hence :—as yet, success hath never smil'd  
On Mary Stuart's champions.

MORTIMER. I'm not scar'd  
By Babington and Tichburn's bloody heads,  
Set up as warnings upon London's bridge ;  
Nor by the ruin of those many victims  
Who have, in such attempts, found certain death :  
They also found therein immortal honour,  
And death, in rescuing you, is dearest bliss.

MARY. It is in vain : nor force nor guile can save me :—  
My enemies are watchful, and the pow'r  
Is in their hands. It is not Paulet only  
And his dependent host ; all England guards  
My prison gates ; Elizabeth's free will  
Alone can open them.

MORTIMER. Expect not that.

MARY. One man alone on earth can open them.

MORT. O ! let me know his name !

MARY. Lord Leicester.

MORTIMER. He !

[Starts back in wonder.]

The Earl of Leicester ! Your most bloody foe,  
The fav'rite of Elizabeth !—through him—

MARY. If I am to be sav'd at all, 'twill be  
Through him, and him alone. Go to him, Sir ;  
Freely confide in him : and, as a proof  
You come from me, present this paper to him.

[She takes a paper from her bosom ; MORTIMER  
draws back, and hesitates to take it.]

It doth contain my portrait :—take it, Sir ;  
I've borne it long about me : but your uncle's  
Close watchfulness has cut me off from all  
Communication with him ;—you were sent  
By my good angel. [He takes it.]

MORTIMER. O, my Queen ! explain

This mystery.

MARY. Lord Leicester will resolve it :

Confide in him, and he'll confide in you.

Who comes ?

KENNEDY (*entering hastily*).

'Tis Paulet ; and he brings with him

A nobleman from court.

MORTIMER. It is Lord Burleigh.

Collect yourself, my Queen, and strive to hear  
The news he brings, with equanimity.

[He retires through a side door, and KENNEDY  
follows him.]



## SCENE VII.

*Enter* LORD BURLEIGH, *and* PAULET.PAULET (*to* MARY).

You wish'd to-day, assurance of your fate;  
 My Lord of Burleigh brings it to you now:  
 Hear it with resignation, as beseems you.

MARY. I hope with dignity, as it becomes  
 My innocence, and my exalted station.

BUR. . . I come deputed from the court of justice.

MARY. Lord Burleigh lends that court his willing tongue,  
 Which was already guided by his spirit.

PAUL. You speak as if no stranger to the sentence.

MARY. Lord Burleigh brings it; therefore do I know it

PAUL. [It would become you better, Lady Stuart,  
 To listen less to hatred.

MARY. I but name  
 My enemy: I said not that I hate him.]  
 But to the matter, Sir.

BURLEIGH. You have acknowledg'd  
 The jurisdiction of the two-and-forty.

MARY. My Lord, excuse me, if I am oblig'd  
 So soon to interrupt you. I acknowledg'd,  
 Say you, the competence of the commission?  
 I never have acknowledg'd it, my Lord;  
 How could I so? I could not give away  
 My own prerogative, th' intrusted rights  
 Of my own people, the inheritance  
 Of my own son, and ev'ry monarch's honour.  
 [The very laws of England say I could not.]  
 It is enacted by the English laws,  
 That ev'ry one who stands arraign'd of crime  
 Shall plead before a jury of his equals:  
 Who is my equal in this high commission?  
 Kings only are my peers.

BURLEIGH. But yet you heard  
 The points of accusation, answer'd them  
 Before the court——

MARY. 'Tis true, I was deceiv'd  
 By Hatton's crafty counsel:—he advis'd me,  
 For my own honour, and in confidence

In my good cause, and my most strong defence,  
To listen to the points of accusation,  
And prove their falsehood. *This*, my Lord, I did  
From personal respect for the lords' names,  
Not their usurped charge, which I disclaim.

BUR. Acknowledge you the court, or not, that is  
Only a point of mere formality,  
Which cannot here arrest the course of justice.  
You breathe the air of England; you enjoy  
The law's protection, and its benefits:  
You therefore are its subject.

MARY. Sir, I breathe  
The air within an English prison walls:—  
Is that to live in England; to enjoy  
Protection from its laws? I scarcely know  
And never have I pledg'd my faith to keep them.  
I am no member of this realm; I am  
An independent, and a foreign Queen.

BUR. . And do you think that the mere name of Queen  
Can serve you as a charter to foment  
In other countries, with impunity,  
This bloody discord? Where would be the state's  
Security, if the stern sword of justice  
Could not as freely smite the guilty brow  
Of the imperial stranger, as the beggar's?

MARY. I do not wish to be exempt from judgment,  
It is the judges only I disclaim.

BUR. . The judges? How now, Madam! Are they then  
Base wretches, snatch'd at hazard from the crowd?  
Vile wranglers, that make sale of truth and justice;  
Oppression's willing hirelings, and its tools?  
Are they not all the foremost of this land,  
Too independent to be else than honest,  
And too exalted not to soar above  
The fear of Kings, or base servility?  
Are they not those, who rule a gen'rous people  
In liberty and justice; men, whose names  
I need but mention, to dispel each doubt,  
Each mean suspicion which is rais'd against them?  
Stands not the rev'rend Primate at their head,  
The pious shepherd of his faithful people,

The learned Talbot, Keeper of the Seals,  
And Howard, who commands our conqu'ring fleets?  
Say, then, could England's sovereign do more  
Than, out of all the monarchy, elect  
The very noblest, and appoint them judges  
In this great suit? And were it probable  
That party hatred could corrupt *one* heart;  
Can forty chosen men unite to speak  
A sentence just as passion gives command?

MARY (*after a short pause*).

I am struck dumb by that tongue's eloquence,  
Which ever was so ominous to me.  
And how shall I, a weak, untutor'd woman,  
Cope with so subtle, learn'd an orator?  
Yes truly; were these lords as you describe them,  
I must be mute; my cause were lost indeed,  
Beyond all hope, if they pronounc'd me guilty.  
But, Sir, these names, which you are pleas'd to praise,  
These very men, whose weight you think will crush me,  
I see performing in the history  
Of these dominions, very different parts:  
I see this high nobility of England,  
This grave majestic senate of the realm,  
Like to an eastern monarch's vilest slaves,  
Flatter my uncle Henry's sultan fancies:  
I see this noble rev'rend House of Lords,  
Venal alike with the corrupted Commons,  
Make statutes and annul them, ratify  
A marriage and dissolve it, as the voice  
Of power commands: to-day it disinherits,  
And brands the royal daughters of the realm  
With the vile name of bastards, and to-morrow  
Crowns them as queens, and leads them to the throne.  
I see them in four reigns, with pliant conscience,  
Four times abjure their faith; renounce the Pope  
With Henry, yet retain the old belief;  
Reform themselves with Edward; hear the mass  
Again with Mary; with Elizabeth,  
Who governs now, reform themselves again.

BUR. . You say you are not vers'd in England's laws,  
You seem well read, methinks, in her disasters.

MARY. And these men are my judges?

[As LORD BURLEIGH seems to wish to speak.

My Lord Treas'rer,

Tow'rds you I will be just, be you but just  
To me.—'Tis said, that you consult with zeal  
The good of England, and of England's Queen;  
Are honest, watchful, indefatigable:  
I will believe it. Not your private ends,  
Your Sovereign and your country's weal alone,  
Inspire your counsels and direct your deeds.  
Therefore, my noble Lord, you should the more  
Distrust your heart; should see that you mistake not  
The welfare of the government, for justice.  
I do not doubt, besides yourself, there are  
Among my judges many upright men:  
But they are Protestants, are eager all  
For England's quiet, and they sit in judgment  
On me, the Queen of Scotland, and the Papist.  
It is an ancient saying, that the Scots  
And English to each other are unjust;  
And hence the rightful custom, that a Scot  
Against an Englishman, or Englishman  
Against a Scot, cannot be heard in judgment.  
Necessity prescrib'd this cautious law;  
Deep policy oft lies in ancient customs:  
My Lord, we must respect them. Nature cast  
Into the ocean these two fiery nations  
Upon this plank, and she divided it  
Unequally, and bade them fight for it.  
The narrow bed of Tweed alone divides  
These daring spirits; often hath the blood  
Of the contending parties dyed its waves.  
Threat'ning, and sword in hand, the-e thousand years,  
From both its banks they watch their rival's motions,  
Most vigilant and true confederates,  
With ev'ry en'my of the neighbour state.  
No foe oppresses England, but the Scot  
Becomes his firm ally; no civil war  
Inflames the towns of Scotland, but the English  
Add fuel to the fire: this raging hate  
Will never be extinguish'd till, at last,

One parliament in concord shall unite them,  
 One common sceptre rule throughout the isle.

BUR. . And from a Stuart, then, should England hope  
 This happiness?

MARY. O! why should I deny it?

Yes, I confess, I cherish'd the fond hope,  
 I thought myself the happy instrument  
 To join in freedom, 'neath the olive's shade,  
 Two gen'rous realms in lasting happiness!  
 I little thought I should become the victim  
 Of their old hate, their long-liv'd jealousy,  
 And the sad flames of that unhappy strife,  
 I hop'd at last to smother, and for ever:  
 And, as my ancestor, great Richmond, join'd  
 The rival roses after bloody contest,  
 To join in peace the Scotch and English crowns.

BUR. . An evil way you took to this good end,  
 To set the realm on fire, and through the flames  
 Of civil war to strive to mount the throne.

MARY. I wish'd not that:—I wish'd it not, by Heaven!  
 When did I strive at that?—Where are your proofs?

BUR. . I came not hither to dispute; your cause  
 Is no more subject to a war of words.  
 The great majority of forty voices  
 Hath found that you have contraven'd the law  
 Last year enacted, and have now incurr'd  
 Its penalty. *[Producing the verdict.]*

MARY. Upon this statute, then,  
 My Lord, is built the verdict of my judges?

BURLEIGH (*reading*).

Last year it was enacted, "If a plot  
 Henceforth should rise in England, in the name  
 Or for the benefit of any claimant  
 To England's crown, that justice should be done  
 On such pretender, and the guilty party  
 Be prosecuted unto death." Now, since  
 It has been prov'd——

MARY. Lord Burleigh, I can well  
 Imagine that a law expressly aim'd  
 At me, and fram'd to compass my destruction,  
 May to my prejudice be used. O! woe

To the unhappy victim, when the tongue,  
That frames the law, shall execute the sentence.  
Can you deny it, Sir, that this same statute  
Was made for my destruction, and nought else?

BUR. It should have acted as a warning to you :  
By your imprudence it became a snare.  
You saw the precipice which yawn'd before you ;  
Yet, truly warn'd, you plung'd into the deep.  
With Babington, the traitor, and his bands  
Of murderous companions, were you leagued.  
You knew of all, and from your prison led  
Their treasonous plottings with a deep-laid plan.  
MARY. When did I that, my Lord ? Let them produce  
The documents.

BURLEIGH. You have already seen them :  
They were, before the court, presented to you.

MARY. Mere copies written by another hand ;  
Show me the proof that they were dictated  
By me, that they proceeded from my lips,  
And in those very terms in which you read them.

BUR. Before his execution, Babington  
Confess'd they were the same which he receiv'd.

MARY. Why was he in his lifetime not produc'd  
Before my face ? Why was he then despatch'd  
So quickly, that he could not be confronted  
With her whom he accus'd ?

BURLEIGH. Beside, my Lady,  
Your secretaries, Curl and Nau, declare  
On oath, they are the very selfsame letters  
Which, from your lips, they faithfully transcrib'd.

MARY. And on my menials' testimony, then,  
I am condemn'd ; upon the word of those  
Who have betray'd me, *me*, their rightful Queen !  
Who in that very moment, when they came  
As witnesses against me, broke their faith !

BUR. You said yourself, you held your countryman  
To be an upright conscientious man.

MARY. I thought him such ; but 'tis the hour of danger  
Alone, which tries the virtue of a man  
He ever was an honest man, but weak  
In understanding ; and his subtle comrade,

Whose faith, observe, I never answer'd for,  
Might easily seduce him to write down  
More than he should; the rack may have compell'd him  
To say and to confess more than he knew.  
He hop'd to save himself by this false witness,  
And thought it could not injure *me*—a Queen.

BUR. The oath he swore was free and unconstrain'd.

MARY. But not before my face! How now, my Lord,  
The witnesses you name are still alive,  
Let them appear against me, face to face!  
And there repeat what they have testified!  
Why am I then denied that privilege,  
That right, which e'en the murderer enjoys?  
I know from Talbot's mouth, my former keeper,  
'That in this reign a statute has been pass'd,  
Which orders that the plaintiff be confronted  
With the defendant; is it so, good Paulet?  
I e'er have known you as an honest man,  
Now prove it to me; tell me, on your conscience,  
If such a law exist, or not, in England?

PAUL. Madam, there does: that is the law in England.  
I must declare the truth.

MARY. Well then, my Lord,  
If I am treated by the law of England  
So hardly, when that law oppresses me,  
Say, why avoid this selfsame country's law,  
When 'tis for my advantage? Answer me;  
Why was not Babington confronted with me?  
Why not my servants, who are both alive?

BUR. Be not so hasty, Lady; 'tis not only  
Your plot with Babington——

MARY. 'Tis that alone  
Which arms the law against me; that alone  
From which I'm call'd upon to clear myself.  
Stick to the point, my Lord; evade it not.

BUR. It has been prov'd that you have corresponded  
With the Ambassador of Spain, Mendoza——

MARY. Stick to the point, my Lord.

BURLING. That you have form'd  
Conspiracies to overturn the fix'd  
Religion of the realm; that you have call'd

The bloody daring of licentious might :



Let not these juggling tricks deceive the world.—

*[Returning the sentence*

Though she may murder me, she cannot judge me:—

Let her no longer strive to join the fruits

Of vice with virtue's fair and angel show;

But let her dare to seem the thing she is. *[Exit.*

### SCENE VIII.

BURLEIGH, PAULET.

BUR. . She scorns us, she defies us ! will defy us,  
Ev'n at the scaffold's foot. This haughty heart  
Is not to be subdued. Say, did the sentence  
Surprise her ? Did you see her shed one tear,  
Or even change her colour ? She disdains  
'To make appeal to our compassion. Well  
She knows the wav'ring mind of England's Queen.  
Our apprehensions make her bold.

PAULET. My Lord,  
Take the pretext away which buoys it up,  
And you shall see this proud defiance fail  
That very moment. I must say, my Lord,  
Irregularities have been allowed  
In these proceedings ; Babington and Ballard  
Should have been brought, with her two secretaries,  
Before her, face to face.

BURLEIGH. No, Paulet, no !  
That was not to be risk'd ; her influence  
Upon the human heart is too supreme ;  
Too strong the female empire of her tears.  
Her secretary, Curl, if brought before her,  
And call'd upon to speak the weighty word  
On which her life depends, would straight shrink back,  
And fearfully revoke his own confession.

PAUL. . Then England's enemies will fill the world  
With evil rumours ; and the formal pomp  
Of these proceedings, to the minds of all,  
Will only signalize an act of outrage.

BUR. That is the greatest torment of our Queen,  
[ That she can never 'scape the blame. O God ! ]

Had but this lovely mischief died before  
She set her faithless foot on English ground.

PAUL. . Amen, say I!

BURLEIGH. Had sickness but consum'd her!

PAUL. . England had been secur'd from much misfortune.

BUR. . And yet, if she had died in nature's course,  
The world would still have call'd us murderers.

PAUL. . 'Tis true, the world will think, despite of us,  
Whate'er it list.

BURLEIGH. Yet could it not be prov'd?  
And it would make less noise.

PAULET. Why let it make

'What noise it may. It is not clam'rous blame,  
'Tis righteous censure only, which can wound.

BUR. . We know that holy justice cannot 'scape  
The voice of censure; and the public cry  
Is ever on the side of the unhappy:  
Envy pursues the laurell'd conqueror;  
The sword of justice, which adorns the man,  
Is hateful in a woman's hand; the world  
Will give no credit to a woman's justice,  
If woman be the victim. Vain that we,  
The judges, spoke what conscience dictated;  
*She* has the royal privilege of mercy;  
*She must* exert it: 'twere not to be borne,  
Should she let justice take its full career.

PAUL. . And therefore——

BURLEIGH. Therefore should she live? O! no,  
She must not live; it must not be. 'Tis this,  
Ev'n this, my friend, which so disturbs the Queen,  
And scares all slumber from her couch; I read  
Her soul's distracting contest in her eyes;  
She fears to speak her wishes, yet her looks,  
Her silent looks, significantly ask,  
"Is there not one amongst my many servants  
To save me from this sad alternative?  
Either to tremble in eternal fear  
Upon my throne, or else to sacrifice  
A Queen of my own kindred on the block?"

PAUL. . 'Tis even so; nor can it be avoided—

BUR. . Well might it be avoided, thinks the Queen,  
If she had only more attentive servants.

PAUL. . How more attentive?

**BURLEIGH.** Such as could interpret  
A silent mandate.

PAULET. What? A silent mandate!

BUR. . Who, when a pois'nous adder is deliver'd  
Into their hands, would keep the treach'rous charge  
As if it were a sacred, precious jewel?

PAUL. . A precious jewel is the Queen's good name,  
And spotless reputation : good, my Lord,  
One cannot guard it with sufficient care.

BUR. . When, out of Shrewsb'ry's hand, the Queen of Scots  
Was trusted to Sir Amias Paulet's care,  
The meaning was——

PAULET. I hope to God, my Lord,  
The meaning was, to give the weightiest charge  
Into the purest hands: my Lord, my Lord!  
By Heaven, I had disdain'd this bailiff's office,  
Had I not thought the service claim'd the care  
Of the best man that England's realm can boast.  
Let me not think I am indebted for it  
To any thing but my unblemish'd name.

Bun. . Spread the report, she wastes ; grows sicker still,  
And sicker ; and expires at last in peace ;  
Thus will she perish in the world's rememb'rance,  
And your good name is pure.

PAULET. But not my conscience.

BUR. . Though you refuse us, Sir, your own assistance,  
You will not, sure, prevent another's hand.

PAUL. . No murderer's foot shall e'er approach her threshold,  
Whilst she's protected by my household gods.  
Her life's a sacred trust; to me the head  
Of Queen Elizabeth is not more sacred.  
Ye are the judges; judge, and break the staff;  
And when 'tis time, then let the carpenter,  
With axe and saw appear to build the scaffold.  
My castle's portals shall be open to him,  
The sheriff and the executioners:  
Till then, she is intrusted to my care;  
And, be assur'd, I will fulfil my trust,  
She shall nor *do*, nor *suffer* what's unjust. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II.

## SCENE I.

*London; a Hall in the Palace of Westminster.*

*The EARL OF KENT and SIR WILLIAM DAVISON, meeting.*

DAV. Is that my Lord of Kent? So soon return'd?  
Is then the tourney, the carousal over?

KENT. . How now? Were you not present at the tilt?

DAV. . My office kept me here.

KENT. Believe me, Sir,  
You've lost the fairest show which ever taste  
Devis'd, or graceful dignity perform'd:  
For beauty's virgin fortress was presented,  
As by *Desire* invested; the Earl Marshal,  
The Lord High Admiral, and ten other knights,  
Belonging to the Queen, defended it,  
And France's Cavaliers led the attack.  
A herald march'd before the gallant troop,  
And summon'd, in a madrigal, the fortress;  
And from the walls the Chancellor replied;  
And then th' artillery was play'd, and nosegays,  
Breathing delicious fragrance, were discharg'd  
From neat field-pieces; but in vain, the storm  
Was valiantly resisted, and *Desire*  
Was forc'd, unwillingly, to raise the siege.

DAV. . A sign of evil boding, good, my Lord,  
For the French suitors.

KENT. Why, you know that this  
Was but in sport; when the attack's in earnest,  
The fortress will, no doubt, capitulate.

DAV. . Ha! think you so? I never can believe it.

KENT. . The hardest article of all is now  
Adjusted, and acceded to by France;  
The Duke of Anjou is content to hold  
His holy worship in a private chapel;  
And openly he promises to honour  
And to protect the realm's establish'd faith.  
Had you but heard the people's joyful shouts  
Where'er the tidings spread, for it has been

The country's constant fear the Queen might die,  
 Without immediate issue of her body;  
 And England bear again the Romish chains,  
 If Mary Stuart should ascend the throne.

DAY.

This fear appears superfluous; she goes  
 Into the bridal chamber; Mary Stuart  
 Enters the gates of death.

KENT.

The Queen approaches

## SCENE II.

*Enter ELIZABETH, led in by LEICESTER, COUNT AUBESPINE,  
 BELLIEVRE, LORDS SHREWSBURY and BURLEIGH, with other  
 French and English Gentlemen.*

ELIZABETH (to AUBESPINE).

Count, I am sorry for these noblemen,  
 Whose gallant zeal hath brought them over sea  
 To visit these our shores, that they, with us.  
 Must miss the splendour of St. Germain's court.  
 Such pompous festivals of godlike state  
 I cannot furnish, as the royal court  
 Of France. A sober and contented people,  
 Which crowd around me with a thousand blessings,  
 Whene'er in public I present myself:  
 This is the spectacle which I can show,  
 And not without some pride, to foreign eyes.  
 The splendour of the noble dames who bloom  
 In Cath'rine's beauteous garden would, I know,  
 Eclipse myself, and my more modest merits.

AUB.

The court of England has one lady only,  
 To show the wond'ring foreigner; but all  
 That charms our hearts in the accomplish'd sex,  
 Is seen united in her single person.

BEL.

Great Majesty of England, suffer us  
 To take our leave, and to our royal master,  
 The Duke of Anjou, bring the happy news.  
 The hot impatience of his heart would not  
 Permit him to remain at Paris; he  
 At Amiens awaits the joyful tidings;  
 And thence to Calais reach his posts, to bring

With winged swiftness to his tranced ear  
The sweet consent which, still we humbly hope,  
Your royal lips will graciously pronounce.

ELIZ. . Press me no further now, Count Bellievre,  
It is not now a time, I must repeat,  
To kindle here the joyful marriage torch.  
The heav'n's low'r black and heavy o'er this land ;  
And weeds of mourning would become me better  
Than the magnificence of bridal robes.

A fatal blow is aim'd against my heart ;  
A blow which threatens to oppress my House.

BEL. We only ask your Majesty to promise  
Your royal hand when brighter days shall come.

ELIZ. Monarchs are but the slaves of their condition ;  
They dare not hear the dictates of their hearts :  
My wish was ever to remain unmarried,  
And I had plac'd my greatest pride in this,  
That men hereafter on my tomb might read  
" Here rests the virgin Queen." But my good subjects  
Are not content that this should be : they think,  
E'en now they often think, upon the time  
When I shall be no more. 'Tis not enough  
That blessings now are shower'd upon this land ;  
They ask a sacrifice for future welfare,  
And I must offer up my liberty,  
My virgin liberty, my greatest good,  
To satisfy my people. Thus they'd force  
A lord and master on me. 'Tis by this  
I see that I am nothing but a woman  
In their regard ; and yet methought that I  
Had govern'd like a man, and like a king.  
Well wot I that it is not serving God,  
To quit the laws of nature ; and that those  
Who here have rul'd before me merit praise,  
'That they have op'd the cloister gates, and giv'n  
Thousands of victims of ill-taught devotion,  
Back to the duties of humanity.  
But yet a Queen, who hath not spent her days  
In fruitless, idle contemplation ; who,  
Without a murmur, indefatigably,  
Performs the hardest of all duties ; she

Should be exempted, from that natural law  
Which doth ordain one half of human kind  
Shall ever be subservient to the other.

AUD. Great Queen, you have upon your throne done honour  
To ev'ry virtue ; nothing now remains,  
But to the sex, whose greatest boast you are,  
To be the leading star, and give the great  
Example of its most consistent duties.  
'Tis true, the man exists not who deserves  
That you to him should sacrifice your freedom ;  
Yet if a hero's soul, descent, and rank,  
And manly beauty can make mortal man  
Deserving of this honour—

ELIZABETH. Without doubt,  
My Lord Ambassador, a marriage union  
With France's royal son would do me honour :  
Yes, I acknowledge it without disguise,  
If it must be, if I cannot prevent it,  
If I must yield unto my people's prayers,  
And much I fear they will o'erpower me,  
I do not know, in Europe, any prince  
To whom with less reluctance I would yield  
My greatest treasure, my dear liberty.  
Let this confession satisfy your master.

DEL. It gives the *fairest* hope, and yet it gives  
Nothing *but* hope ; my master wishes more.

ELIZ. What wishes he ?

[*She takes a ring from her finger, and thoughtfully examines it.*]

In this a Queen has not  
One privilege above all other women.  
'This common token marks one common duty,  
One common servitude ; the ring denotes  
Marriage ; and 'tis of rings a chain is form'd.  
Convey this present to his Highness ; 'tis  
As yet no chain, it binds me not as yet.  
But out of it may grow a link to bind me.

BELLIEVRE (*kneeling*).

This present, in his name, upon my knees,  
I do receive, great Queen, and press the kiss

Of homage on the hand of her who is  
Henceforth my princess.

ELIZABETH (*to the EARL OF LEICESTER, whom she, during the last speeches, had continually regarded*).

By your leave, my Lord.

[*She takes the blue riband from his neck\*, and invests Bellievre with it.*]

Invest his Highness with this ornament,  
As I invest you with it, and receive you  
Into the duties of my gallant order.  
And, "Honi soit qui mal y pense." Thus perish  
All jealousy between our several realms,  
And let the bond of confidence unite,  
Henceforth, the crowns of Britain and of France.

BEL. Most sov'reign Queen, this is a day of joy;  
O that it could be so for all, and no  
Afflicted heart within this island mourn.  
See! mercy beams upon thy radiant brow;  
Let the reflection of its cheering light  
Fall on a wretched princess, who concerns  
Britain and France alike.

ELIZABETH. No further, Count!  
Let us not mix two inconsistent things;  
If France be truly anxious for my hand,  
It must partake my interests, and renounce  
Alliance with my foes.

AUBLESPINE In thine own eyes  
Would she not seem to act unworthily,  
If in this joyous treaty, she forgot  
This hapless Queen, the widow of her king;  
In whose behalf, her honour and her faith  
Are bound to plead for grace.

ELIZABETH. Thus urged, I know  
To rate this intercession at its worth;  
France has discharged her duties as a friend,  
I will fulfil my own as England's Queen.  
[*She bows to the French Ambassadors, who, with the other Gentlemen, retire respectfully.*]

\* Till the time of Charles the First, the Knights of the Garter wore the



## SCENE III.

*Enter BURLEIGH, LEICESTER, and TALBOT. The QUEEN takes her seat.*

BUR. . Illustrious sovereign, thou crown'st to day  
 The fervent wishes of thy people : now  
 We can rejoice in the propitious days  
 Which thou bestow'st upon us ; and we look  
 No more with fear and trembling tow'rd's the time  
 Which, charg'd with storms, futurity presented.  
 Now, but one only care disturbs this land ;  
 It is a sacrifice which every voice  
 Demands ; O ! grant but this, and England's peace  
 Will be establish'd now and evermore.

ELIZ. . What wish they still, my Lord ? Speak.

BURLEIGH. They demand

The Stuart's head. If to thy people thou  
 Wouldst now secure the precious boon of freedom,  
 And the fair light of truth so dearly won,  
 Then she must die : if we are not to live  
 In endless terror for thy precious life,  
 The enemy must fall : for well thou know'st,  
 That all thy Britons are not true alike :  
 Romish idolatry has still its friends  
 In secret, in this island, who foment  
 The hatred of our enemies. Their hearts  
 All turn towards this Stuart ; they are leagu'd  
 With the two plotting brothers of Lorraine,  
 The foes inveterate of thy house and name.  
 'Gainst thee this raging faction hath declar'd  
 A war of desolation, which they wage  
 With the deceitful instruments of hell.  
 At Rheims, the Cardinal Archbishop's sec,  
 There is the arsenal, from which they dart  
 These lightnings ; there the school of regicide ;  
 Thence, in a thousand shapes disguis'd, are sent  
 Their secret missionaries to this isle ;

blue riband with the George, about their necks, as they still do the collars,  
 on great days.—TRANSLATOR.

Their bold and daring zealots ; for from *thence*,  
 Have we not seen the third assassin come ?  
 And inexhausted is the direful breed  
 Of secret enemies in *this* abyss.  
 While in her castle sits, at Fotheringay,  
 The *Até*\* of this everlasting war,  
 Who, with the torch of love, spreads flames around ;  
 For her who sheds delusive hopes on all,  
 Youth dedicates itself to certain death ;  
 To set her free is the pretence—the aim  
 Is to establish her upon the throne.  
 For this accursed House of Guise denies  
 Thy sacred right ; and in their mouths thou art  
 A robber of the throne, whom chance has crown'd.  
 By them this thoughtless woman was deluded,  
 Proudly to style herself the Queen of England :  
 No peace can be with her, and with her house ;  
 [ Their hatred is too bloody, and their crimes  
 Too great ; ] thou must resolve to strike, or suffer ;—  
 Her life is death to thee, her death thy life.  
 My Lord, you bear a melancholy office :  
 I know the purity which guides your zeal,  
 The solid wisdom which informs your speech :  
 And yet I hate this wisdom, when it calls  
 For blood, I hate it in my inmost soul.  
 Think of a milder counsel—Good, my Lord  
 Of Shrewsbury, we crave your judgment here.  
 Desire you but to know, most gracious Queen,

ELIZ.

TAL.

\* The picture of *Até*, the Goddess of mischief, we are acquainted with from Homer, *Il.* v. 91. 130. *I.* 501. She is a daughter of Jupiter, and enger to prejudice every one, even the immortal gods. She counteracted Jupiter himself, on which account he seized her by her beautiful hair, and hurled her from heaven to the earth, where she now, striding over the heads of men, excites them to evil, in order to involve them in calamity.—HERDER.

Shakspeare has, in *Julius Cæsar*, made a fine use of this image :—

“ And Cæsar's spirit, ranging for revenge,  
 With *Até* by his side, come hot from hell,  
 Shall in these confines, with a monarch's voice,  
 Cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war.”

I need not point out to the reader, the beautiful propriety of introducing this evil spirit on this occasion.—TRANSLATOR.



TALBOT (*after a pause*).

The proof of justice lies not in the voice  
Of numbers ; England 's not the world, nor is  
Thy parliament the focus, which collects  
The vast opinion of the human race.  
This present England is no more the future,  
Than 'tis the past ; as inclination changes,  
Thus ever ebbs and flows the unstable tide  
Of public judgment. Say not then, that thou  
Must act as stern necessity compels,  
That thou must yield to the importunate  
Petitions of thy people ; ev'ry hour  
Thou canst experience that thy will is free.  
Make trial, and declare, thou hatest blood,  
And that thou wilt protect thy sister's life ;  
Show those who wish to give thee other counsels,  
That *here* thy royal anger is not feign'd,  
And thou shalt see how stern necessity  
Can vanish, and what once was titled justice  
Into injustice be converted : thou  
Thyself must pass the sentence, thou alone :—  
Trust not to this unsteady, trembling reed,  
But hear the gracious dictates of thy heart.  
God hath not planted rigour in the frame  
Of woman ; and the founders of this realm,  
Who to the female hand have not denied  
The reins of government, intend by this  
To show that mercy, not severity,  
Is the best virtue to adorn a crown.

ELIZ. . Lord Shrewsb'ry is a fervent advocate  
For mine, and England's enemy ; I must  
Prefer those counsellors who wish *my* welfare.

TAL. . . Hor advocates have an invidious task !  
None will, by speaking in her favour, dare  
To meet thy anger : suffer, then, an old  
And faithful counsellor (whom nought on earth  
Can tempt, on the grave's brink) to exercise  
The pious duty of humanity.  
It never shall be said, that, in thy council,  
Passion and interest could find a tongue,  
While mercy's pleading voice alone was mute,

All circumstances have conspir'd against her ;  
'Thou ne'er hast seen her face, and nothing speaks  
Within thy breast for one that 's stranger to thee.  
I do not take the part of her misdeeds ;  
They say 'twas she who plann'd her husband's murder :  
'Tis true that she espous'd his murderer.  
A grievous crime, no doubt ; but then it happen'd  
In darksome days of trouble and dismay,  
In the stern agony of civil war,  
When she, a woman, helpless and hemm'd in  
By a rude crowd of rebel vassals, sought  
Protection in a powerful chieftain's arms.  
God knows what arts were used to overcome her !  
For woman is a weak and fragile thing.

ELIZ. . Woman's not weak ; there are heroic souls  
Among the sex ; and, in my presence, Sir,  
I do forbid to speak of woman's weakness.

TAL. . . Misfortune was for thee a rigid school ;  
Thou wast not station'd on the sunny side  
Of life ; thou saw'st no throne, from far, before thee ;  
The grave was gaping for thee at thy feet.  
At Woodstock, and in London's gloomy tower,  
'Twas *there* the gracious father of this land  
Taught thee to know thy duty, by misfortune.  
No flatt'rer sought thee there : there learn'd thy soul,  
Far from the noisy world and its distractions,  
To commune with itself, to think apart,  
And estimate the real goods of life.  
No God protected this poor sufferer :  
Transplanted in her early youth to France.  
The Court of levity and thoughtless joys,  
There, in the round of constant dissipation,  
She never heard the earnest voice of truth ;  
She was deluded by the glare of vice,  
And driven onward by the stream of ruin.  
Hers was the vain possession of a face,  
And she outshone all others of her sex  
As far in beauty, as in noble birth.

ELIZ. . Collect yourself, my Lord of Shrewsbury ;  
Bethink you we are met in solemn council.  
Those charms must surely be without compare,

Which can engender, in an elder's blood,  
Such fire. My Lord of Leicester, you alone  
Are silent; does the subject which has made  
Him eloquent, deprive you of your speech?

LEIC. . Amazement ties my tongue, my Queen, to think  
That they should fill thy soul with such alarms,  
And that the idle tales, which, in the streets  
Of London, terrify the people's ears,  
Should reach th' enlighten'd circle of thy council,  
And gravely occupy our statesmen's minds.  
Astonishment possesses me, I own,  
To think this luckland Queen of Scotland, she  
Who could not save her own poor throne, the jest  
Of her own vassals, and her country's refuse,  
Who, in her fairest days of freedom, was  
But thy despised puppet, should become  
At once thy terror when a prisoner.  
What, in Heaven's name, can make her formidable?  
That she lays claim to England? that the Guises  
Will not acknowledge thee as Queen? Did then  
Thy people's loyal fealty await  
These Guises' approbation? Can these Guises  
With their objections, ever shake the right  
Which birth hath giv'n thee; which, with one consent,  
The votes of parliament have ratified?  
And is not she, by Henry's will, pass'd o'er  
In silence? Is it probable that England,  
As yet so bless'd in the new light's enjoyment,  
Should throw itself into this papist's arms?  
From thee, the sov'reign it adores, desert  
To Darnley's murderess? What will they then,  
These restless men, who even in thy lifetime  
Torment thee with a successor; who cannot  
Dispose of thee in marriage soon enough  
To rescue church and state from fancied peril?  
Stand'st thou not blooming there in youthful prime  
While each step leads her tow'rd's th'expecting tomb?  
By Heavens, I hope thou wilt full many a year  
Walk o'er the Stuart's grave, and ne'er become  
Thyself the instrument of her sad end.

BUR Lord Leicester hath not always held this tone.

LEIC. . 'Tis true, I in the court of justice gave  
 My verdict for her death ; here, in the council,  
 I may consistently speak otherwise :  
 Here, right is not the question, but advantage.  
 Is this a time to fear her power, when France,  
 Her only succour, has abandon'd her ?  
 When thou preparest with thy hand to bless  
 The royal son of France, when the fair hope  
 Of a new, glorious stem of sovereigns  
 Begins again to blossom in this land ?  
 Why hasten then her death ? She's dead already.  
 Contempt and scorn are death to her ; take heed  
 Lest ill tim'd pity call her into life.  
 'Tis therefore my advice to leave the sentence,  
 By which her life is forfeit, in full force.  
 Let her live on ; but let her live beneath  
 The headsman's axe, and, from the very hour  
 One arm is lifted for her, let it fall.

ELIZABETH (*rises*).

My Lords, I now have heard your sev'ral thoughts,  
 And give my ardent thanks for this your zeal.  
 With God's assistance, who the hearts of kings  
 Illumines, I will weigh your arguments,  
 And choose what best my judgment shall approve.

[*To BURLEIGH.*

[ Lord Burleigh's honest fears, I know it well,  
 Are but the offspring of his faithful care ;  
 But yet, Lord Leicester has most truly said,  
 There is no need of haste ; our enemy  
 Hath lost already her most dangerous sting—  
 The mighty arm of France : the fear that she  
 Might quickly be the victim of their zeal  
 Will curb the blind impatience of her friends. ]

#### SCENE IV.

*Enter SIR AMIAS PAULET and MORTIMER.*

ELIZ. There's Sir Amias Paulet ; noble Sir,  
 What tidings bring you ?

PAUL. Gracious Sovereign,  
 My nephew, who but lately is return'd  
 From foreign travel, kneels before thy feet,

And offers thee his first and earliest homage.  
Grant him thy royal grace, and let him grow  
And flourish in the sunshine of thy favour.

MORTIMER (*kneeling on one knee*).

Long live my royal mistress ! Happiness  
And glory from a crown to grace her brows !

ELIZ. Arise, Sir Knight ; and welcome here in England ;  
You've made, I hear, the tour, have been in France  
And Rome, and tarried too some time at Rheims ;  
Tell me what plots our enemies are hatching ?

MORT. May God confound them all ! And may the darts  
Which they shall aim against my Sovereign,  
Recoiling, strike their own perfidious breasts !

ELIZ. Did you see Morgan, and the wily Bishop  
Of Ross ?

MORT. I saw, my Queen, all Scottish exiles  
Who forge at Rheims their plots against this realm.  
I stole into their confidence, in hopes  
To learn some hint of their conspiracies.

PAUL. Private despatches they entrusted to him,  
In cyphers, for the Queen of Scots, which he,  
With loyal hand, hath given up to us.

ELIZ. Say, what are then their latest plans of treason ?

MORT. It struck them all as 'twere a thunderbolt,  
That France should leave them, and with England  
close

This firm alliance ; now they turn their hopes  
Tow'rd's Spain——

ELIZABETH. This, Walsingham hath written us.

MORT. Besides, a bull, which from the Vatican  
Pope Sixtus lately levell'd at thy throne,  
Arriv'd at Rheims, as I was leaving it :  
With the next ship, we may expect it here.

LEIC. . England no more is frighten'd by such arms.

BUR. . They're always dangerous in bigots' hands.

ELIZABETH (*looking stedfastly at MORTIMER*).

Your enemies have said, that you frequented  
The schools at Rheims, and have abjur'd your  
faith.

MORT. So I pretended, that I must confess ;  
Such was my anxious wish to serve my Queen.



ELIZABETH (*to PAULET, who presents papers to her*).

What have you there?

PAULET. 'Tis from the Queen of Scots.

'Tis a petition, and to thee address'd.

BURLEIGH (*hastily catching at it*).

Give me the paper.

PAULET (*giving it to the QUEEN*).

By your leave, my Lord  
High Treasurer; the Lady order'd me  
To bring it to her Majesty's own hands.  
She says, I am her enemy; I am  
The enemy of her offences only,  
And that which is consistent with my duty  
I will, and readily, oblige her in.

[*The QUEEN takes the letter: as she reads it, MORTIMER and LEICESTER speak some words in private.*]

BURLEIGH (*to PAULET*).

What may the purport of the letter be?  
Idle complaints, from which one ought to screen  
The Queen's too tender heart

PAULET What it contains.

She did not hide from me; she asks a boon;  
She begs to be admitted to the grace  
Of speaking with the Queen.

BURLEIGH. It cannot be.

TAL. . Why not? Her supplication's not unjust.

BUR. . For her, the base encourager of murder;  
Her, who hath thirsted for our sov'reign's blood,  
The privilege to see the royal presence  
Is forfeited: a faithful counsellor  
Can never give this treacherous advice.

TAL. . And if the Queen is gracious, Sir, are you  
The man to hinder pity's soft emotions?

BUR. . She is condemn'd to death: her head is laid  
Beneath the axe, and it would ill become  
The Queen to see a death-devoted head.  
The sentence cannot have its execution  
If the Queen's Majesty approaches her,  
For pardon still attends the royal presence,  
As sickness flies the health-dispensing hand.

ELIZABETH (*having read the letter, dries her tears*).

O! what is man! What is the bliss of earth!  
 To what extremities is she reduc'd  
 Who with such proud and splendid hopes began!  
 Who, call'd to sit on the most ancient throne  
 Of Christendom, misled by vain ambition,  
 Hop'd with a triple crown to deck her brows!  
 How is her language alter'd, since the time  
 When she assum'd the arms of England's crown,  
 And by the flatterers of her Court was styled  
 Sole monarch of the two Britannic isles!  
 Forgive me, Lords, my heart is cleft in twain,  
 Anguish possesses me, and my soul bleeds  
 To think that earthly goods are so unstable,  
 And that the dreadful fate which rules mankind  
 Should threaten mine own house, and scowl so near  
 me.

TAL. . . O, Queen! the God of mercy hath inform'd  
 Your heart; O! hearken to this heav'nly guidance.  
 Most grievously, indeed, hath she aton'd  
 Her grievous crime, and it is time that now,  
 At last, her heavy penance have an end.  
 Stretch forth your hand, to raise this abject Queen,  
 And, like the luminous vision of an angel,  
 Ascend into her gaol's sepulchral night.

BUR. . . Be stedfast, mighty Queen; let no emotion  
 Of seeming laudable humanity  
 Mislead thee; take not from thyself the pow'r  
 Of acting as necessity commands.  
 Thou *canst* not pardon her, thou *canst* not save her:  
 Then heap not on thyself the odious blame,  
 That thou, with cruel and contemptuous triumph,  
 Didst glut thyself with gazing on thy victim.

LEIC. . Let us, my Lords, remain within our bounds;  
 The Queen is wise, and doth not need our counsels,  
 To lead her to the most becoming choice.  
 This meeting of the Queens hath nought in com-  
 mon  
 With the proceedings of the Court of Justice.  
 The law of England, not the monarch's will,  
 Condemns the Queen of Scotland, and 'twere worthy

Of the great soul of Queen Elizabeth,  
To follow the soft dictates of her heart,  
Though justice swerve not from its rigid path.

ELIZ. . Retire, my Lords.—We shall, perhaps, find means  
To reconcile the tender claims of pity  
With what necessity imposes on us.  
And now retire.—

[*The Lords retire: she calls* SIR EDWARD MORTIMER *back.*

Sir Edward Mortimer!

SCENE V.

ELIZABETH, MORTIMER.

ELIZABETH (*having measured him for some time, with her eyes, in silence*).

You've shown a spirit of advent'rous courage,  
And self-possession, far beyond your years.  
He who has timely learnt to play so well  
The difficult dissembler's needful task  
Becomes a perfect man before his time,  
And shortens his probationary years.  
Fate calls you to a lofty scene of action;  
I prophesy it, and can, happily  
For you, fulfil, myself, my own prediction.

MORT. . Illustrious mistress, what I am, and all  
I can accomplish, is devoted to you.

ELIZ. . You've made acquaintance with the foes of England.  
Their hate against me is implacable;  
Their fell designs are inexhaustible.  
As yet, indeed, Almighty Providence  
Hath shielded me; but on my brows the crown  
For ever trembles, while *she* lives who fans  
Their bigot-zeal, and animates their hopes.

MORT. . She lives no more, as soon as you command it.

ELIZ. . O, Sir! I thought I saw my labour's end,  
And I am come no farther than at first.  
I wish'd to let the laws of England act,  
And keep my own hands pure from blood's defilement.

The sentence is pronounc'd—what gain I by it?  
 It must be executed, Mortimer,  
 And I must authorize the execution.  
 The blame will ever light on me, I must  
 Avow it, nor can save appearances.  
 That is the worst—

MORTIMER. But can appearances  
 Disturb your conscience where the cause is just?

ELIZ. . You are unpractis'd in the world, Sir Knight;  
 What we appear, is subject to the judgment  
 Of all mankind, and what we are, of no man,  
 No one will be convinc'd that I am right:  
 I must take care that my connivance in  
 Her death be wrapp'd in everlasting doubt.  
 In deeds of such uncertain double visage  
 Safety lies only in obscurity.  
 Those measures are the worst that stand avow'd,  
 What 's not abandon'd, is not wholly lost.

MORTIMER (*seeking to learn her meaning*).

Then it perhaps were best—

ELIZABETH (*quick*). Ay, surely 'twere  
 The best; O, Sir, my better angel speaks  
 Through you;—go on then, worthy Sir, conclude;  
 You are in earnest, you examine deep,  
 Have quite a different spirit from your uncle.

MORTIMER (*surprised*).

Have you imparted then your wishes to Lim?

ELIZ. . I am sorry that I have.

MORTIMER. Excuse his age,  
 The old man is grown scrupulous; such bold  
 Adventures ask the enterprising heart  
 Of youth—

ELIZABETH. And may I venture then on *you*—

MORT. My hand I'll lend thee; save then as thou canst  
 Thy reputation—

ELIZABETH. Yes, Sir; if you could  
 But waken me some morning with this news—  
 “Maria Stuart, your blood-thirsty foe,  
 Breath'd yesternight her last”—

MORTIMER. . . . Depend on me.

ELIZ. . When shall my head lie calmly down to sleep?

MORT. The next new-moon will terminate thy fears.

ELIZ. And be the self-same happy day the dawn  
Of your preferment—so God speed you, Sir;  
And be not hurt, in chance, my thankfulness  
Should wear the mask of darkness.—Silence is  
The happy suitor's god.—The closest bonds,  
The dearest, are the work of secrecy. *[Exit.*

## SCENE VI.

MORTIMER (*alone*).

Go, false deceitful Queen! As thou deludest  
The world, e'en so I cozen thee; 'tis right,  
Thus to betray thee; 'tis a worthy deed.  
Look I then like a murd'rer? Hast thou read  
Upon my brow such base dexterity?  
Trust only to *my* arm, and keep thine own  
Conceal'd—assume the pious outward show  
Of mercy 'fore the world, while reckoning  
In secret on my murd'rous aid; and thus  
By gaining time we shall ensure her rescue.  
Thou wilt exalt me!—show'st me from afar  
The costly recompense: but even were  
Thyself the prize, and all thy woman's favour,  
What art thou, poor one, and what canst thou proffer?  
I scorn ambition's avaricious strife.  
With *her* alone is all the charm of life,  
O'er *her*, in rounds of endless glory, hover  
Spirits with grace, and youth eternal bless'd,  
Celestial joy is thron'd upon her breast  
Thou hast but earthly, mortal goods to offer—  
That sov'reign good, for which all else be slighted,  
When heart in heart, delighting and delighted;  
Together flow in sweet forgetfulness;—  
Ne'er didst thou woman's fairest crown possess,  
Ne'er hast thou with thy hand a lover's heart requited.  
—I must attend Lord Leicester, and deliver  
Her letter to him—'tis a hateful charge—  
I have no confidence in this court puppet—  
*I* can effect her rescue, *I* alone;  
Be danger, honour, and the prize my own,  
*[As he is going, PAULET meets him.*

## SCENE VII

MORTIMER, PAULET

PAUL. . What said the Queen to you?—

MORTIMER. 'Twas nothing, Sir ;  
Nothing of consequence—PAULET (*looking at him earnestly*). Hear, Mortimer !  
It is a false and slipp'ry ground on which  
You tread. The grace of princes is alluring,  
Youth loves ambition—let not yours betray you.

MORT. Was it not yourself that brought me to the Court ?

PAUL. O, would to God I had not done as much !  
The honour of *our* house was never reap'd  
In courts—stand fast my nephew—purchase not  
Too dear, nor stain your conscience with a crime.

MORT. What are these fears ? What are you dreaming of ?

PAUL. . How high soe'er the Queen may pledge herself  
To raise you, trust not her alluring words.  
[ The spirit of the world's a lying spirit,  
And vice is a deceitful, treach'rous friend.  
She will deny you, if you listen to her ;  
And, to preserve her own good name, will punish  
The bloody deed, which she herself enjoin'd.

MORT. The bloody deed!—

PAULET. Away, dissimulation!—  
I know the deed the Queen propos'd to you.  
She hopes that your ambitious youth will prove  
More docile than my rigid age. But say,  
Have you then pledg'd your promise, have you?—

MORT. Uncle!

PAUL. . If you have done so, I abandon you,  
And lay my curse upon you—LEICESTER (*entering*). Worthy Sir!  
I with your nephew wish a word.—The Queen  
Is graciously inclin'd to him ; she wills  
That to his custody the Scottish Queen  
Be with full powers entrusted. She relies  
On his fidelity.

PAULET. Relies!—'tis well—

LEIC. . What say you, Sir ?

PAULET. Her Majesty relies  
On him; and I, my noble Lord, rely  
Upon myself, and my two open eyes.

[Exit.

## SCENE VIII.

LEICESTER, MORTIMER.

LEICESTER (*surprised*). What ailed the Knight?

MORTIMER. My Lord, I cannot tell

What angers him :—the confidence, perhaps,  
The Queen so suddenly confers on me.

LEIC. . Are you deserving then of confidence?

MORT. . This would I ask of you, my Lord of Leicester.

LEIC. . You said you wish'd to speak with me in private.

MORT. . Assure me first that I may safely venture.

LEIC. . Who gives me an assurance on your side?

Let not my want of confidence offend you;  
I see you, Sir, exhibit at this court  
Two diff'rent aspects; one of them *must* be  
A borrow'd one; but which of them is real?

MORT. . The selfsame doubts I have concerning you.

LEIC. . Which, then, shall pave the way to confidence?

MORT. . He who, by doing it, is least in danger

LEIC. . Well, that are you—

MORTIMER. No, you;—the evidence

Of such a weighty, powerful peer as you  
Can overwhelm my voice. My accusation  
Is weak against your rank and influence.

LEIC. . Sir, you mistake. In ev'rything but this  
I'm pow'rful here; but in this tender point,  
Which I am call'd upon to trust you with,  
I am the weakest man of all the Court,  
The poorest testimony can undo me.

MORT. . If the all-pow'rful Earl of Leicester deign  
To stoop so low to meet me, and to make  
Such a confession to me, I may venture  
To think a little better of myself,  
And lead the way in magnanimity.

LEIC. . Lead you the way of confidence, I'll follow.

MORTIMER (*producing suddenly the letter*).

Here is a letter from the Queen of Scotland.

LEICESTER (*alarmed, catches hastily at the letter*).

Speak softly, Sir!—what see I?—Oh, it is  
Her picture!—

[*Kisses and examines it with speechless joy—a  
pause.*]

MORTIMER (*who has watched him closely the whole time*).

Now, my Lord, I can believe you.

LEICESTER (*having hastily run through the letter*).

You know the purport of this letter, Sir?

MORT. . Not I.—

LEICESTER. Indeed! She surely hath inform'd you—

MORT. . Nothing hath she inform'd me of. She said  
You would explain this riddle to me—'tis  
To me a riddle, that the Earl of Leicester,  
The far-fam'd fav'rite of Elizabeth,  
The open, bitter enemy of Mary,  
And one of those who spoke her mortal sentence,  
Should be the man from whom the Queen expects  
Deliv'rance from her woes; and yet it must be;  
Your eyes express too plainly, what your heart  
Feels for the hapless lady.—

LEICESTER. Tell me, Sir,

First, how it comes that you should take so warm  
An int'rest in her fate; and what it was  
Gain'd you her confidence?—

MORTIMER. My Lord, I can,

And in few words, explain this mystery.  
I lately have at Rome abjur'd my creed,  
And stand in correspondence with the Guises.  
A letter from the Cardinal Archbishop  
Was my credential with the Queen of Scots.

LEIC. . I am acquainted, Sir, with your conversion;  
'Twas that which wak'd my confidence towards you.  
Each remnant of distrust be henceforth banish'd;  
Your hand, Sir, pardon me these idle doubts.  
I cannot use too much precaution here.  
Knowing how Walsingham and Burleigh hate me,  
And, watching me, in secret spread their snares;  
You might have been their instrument, their creature,  
To lure me to their toils.



**MORTIMER.**

How poor a part

So great a nobleman is forc'd to play  
At court! My Lord, I pity you.

**LEICESTER.**

**With joy**

I rest upon the faithful breast of friendship,  
Where I can ease me of this long constraint.  
You seem surpris'd, Sir, that my heart is turn'd  
So suddenly towards the captive Queen.

In truth, I never hated her ;—the times  
Have forc'd me to appear her enemy.

She was, as you well know, my destined bride,  
Long since, ere she bestow'd her hand on Darnley,  
While yet the beams of glory round her smil'd.  
Coldly I *then* refused the proffered boon.

Now in confinement, at the gates of death,  
I claim her, at the hazard of my life.

MORT. . True magnanimity, my Lord—

**LEICESTER.**

## The state

Of circumstances, since that time, is chang'd.  
Ambition made me all insensible  
To youth and beauty.—Mary's hand I held  
Too insignificant for me ;—I hoped  
To be the husband of the Queen of England

**MORT.** . It is well known she gave you preference  
Before all others.

**LEICESTER.**

So, indeed, it seem'd.

Now, after ten lost years of tedious courtship,  
And hateful self-constraint—O, Sir, my heart  
Must ease itself of this long agony.

They call me happy!—Did they only know  
What the chains are, for which they envy me!

When I had sacrificed ten bitter years

To the proud idol of her vanity;

Submitted with a slave's humility

'To ev'ry change of her despotic fancies ;

The plaything of each little wayward whim.

At times by seeming tenderness caressed,

As oft repulsed with proud and cold disda

Alike tormented by her grace and rigour :

Watch'd like a prisoner by the Argus-eyes

Of jealousy; examin'd like a school-boy,

And rail'd at like a servant.—O, no tongue  
Can paint this hell —

MORTIMER. My Lord, I feel for you.

LEIC. . To lose, and at the very goal, the prize!  
Another comes to rob me of the fruits  
Of my so anxious wooing. I must lose  
To her young blooming husband all those rights  
Of which I was so long in full possession;  
And I must from the stage descend, where I  
So long have play'd the most distinguish'd part.  
'Tis not her hand alone this envious stranger  
Threatens, he'd rob me of her favour too;  
She is a woman, and he form'd to please.

MORT. . He is the son of Cath'rine. He has learnt,  
In a good school, the arts of flattery.

LEIC. . Thus fall my hopes;—I strove to seize a plank  
To bear me in this shipwreck of my fortunes,  
And my eye turn'd itself towards the hope  
Of former days once more; then Mary's image  
Within me was renew'd, and youth and beauty  
Once more asserted all their former rights.  
No more 'twas cold ambition; 'twas my heart  
Which now compar'd, and with regret I felt  
The value of the jewel I had lost.  
With horror I beheld her in the depths  
Of misery, cast down by my transgression;  
Then wak'd the hope in me, that I might still  
Deliver and possess her; I contriv'd  
To send her, through a faithful hand, the news  
Of my conversion to her interests;  
And in this letter which you brought me, she  
Assures me that she pardons me, and offers  
Herself as guerdon, if I rescue her.

MORT. . But you attempted nothing for her rescue.  
You let her be condemn'd without a word;  
You gave, yourself, your verdict for her death;  
A miracle must happen, and the light  
Of truth must move me, *me*, her keeper's nephew,  
And Heav'n ust, in the Vatican at Rome,  
Prepare for her an unexpected succour,  
Else had she never found the way to you.

- LEIC. . O, Sir! it has tormented me enough!  
About this time it was, that they remov'd her  
From Talbot's castle, and deliver'd her  
Up to your uncle's stricter custody.  
Each way to her was shut. I was oblig'd,  
Before the world, to persecute her still;  
But do not think that I would patiently  
Have seen her led to death. No, Sir; I hop'd,  
And still I hope, to ward off all extremes,  
Till I can find some certain means to save her.
- MORT. . These are already found: my Lord of Leicester,  
Your gen'rous confidence in me deserves  
A like return. I will deliver her.  
That is my object here—my dispositions  
Are made already, and your pow'rful aid,  
Assures us of success in our attempt.
- LEIC. . What say you?—you alarm me—how?—you would—
- MORT. . I'll open forcibly her prison-gates:—  
I have confederates, and all is ready.
- LEIC. . You have confederates, accomplices?  
Alas! In what rash enterprise would you  
Engage me? And these friends, know they *my* secret?
- MORT. . Fear not; our plan was laid without your help,  
Without your help it would have been accomplish'd,  
Had she not signified her resolution  
To owe her liberty to you alone.
- LEIC. . And can you then, with certainty, assure me,  
That in your plot my name has not been mention'd?
- MORT. . You may depend upon it. How, my Lord,  
So scrupulous when help is offer'd you?  
You wish to rescue Mary, and possess her;  
You find confed'rates; sudden, unexpected,  
The readiest means fall, as it were from Heav'n,  
Yet you show more perplexity than joy.
- LEIC. . We must avoid all violence; it is  
Too dangerous an enterprise.
- MORTIMER. Delay  
Is also dangerous.
- LEICESTER. I tell you, Sir,  
'Tis not to be attempted—
- MORTIMER. 'Tis, my Lord,

Too hazardous for *you* who would possess her ;  
But *we*, who only wish to rescue her,  
*We* are more bold.

LEICESTER. Young man, you are too hasty  
In such a thorny, dangerous attempt.

MORT. . And you too scrupulous in honour's cause.

LEIC. . I see the trammels that are spread around us.

MORT. . And I feel courage to break through them all.

LEIC. . Fool-hardiness and madness, is this courage?

MORT. . This prudence is not bravery, my Lord.

LEIC. . You surely wish to end like Babington.

MORT. . You not to imitate great Norfolk's virtue.

LEIC. . Norfolk ne'er won the bride he woo'd so fondly.

MORT. . But yet he prov'd how truly he deserved her.

LEIC. . If *we* are ruin'd, she must fall with us.

MORT. . If *we* risk nothing, she will ne'er be rescued.

LEIC. . You will not weigh the matter, will not hear ;  
With blind and hasty rashness you destroy  
The plans which I so happily had framed.

MORT. . And what were then the plans which *you* had fram'd ?  
What have *you* done then to deliver her ?

And how, if I were miscreant enough  
To murder her, as was propos'd to me  
This moment by Elizabeth, and which  
She looks upon as certain ; only name  
The measures *you* have taken to protect her ?

LEIC. . Did the Queen give you then this bloody order ?

MORT. . She was deceiv'd in me, as Mary is  
In you.

LEICESTER. And have you promis'd it ; say, have you ?

MORT. . That she might not engage another's hand,  
I offer'd mine.

LEICESTER. Well done, Sir,—that was right ;—  
This gives us leisure, for she rests secure  
Upon your bloody service, and the sentence  
Is unfulfill'd the while, and we gain time.

MORTIMER (*angrily*).

No, we are losing time.

LEICESTER The Queen depends  
On you. and will the readier make a show  
Of mercy—and I may prevail on her

To give an audience to her adversary ;  
 And by this stratagem we tie her hands :  
 Yes ! I will make the attempt, strain ev'ry nerve.

MORT. . And what is gain'd by this ? When she discovers  
 That I am cheating her, that Mary lives ;  
 Are we not where we were ? She never will  
 Be free ; the mildest doom which can await her  
 At best, is but perpetual confinement  
 A daring deed must one day end the matter ;  
 Why will you not with such a deed begin ?  
 The pow'r is in your hands, would you but rouse  
 The might of your dependents round about  
 Your many castles, 'twere an host ; and still  
 Has Mary many secret friends. The Howards  
 And Percies' noble houses, though their chiefs  
 Be fall'n, are rich in heroes ; they but wait  
 For the example of some potent lord.  
 Away with feigning—act an open part,  
 And, like a loyal knight, protect your fair ;  
 Fight a good fight for her ! You know you are  
 Lord of the person of the Queen of England,  
 Whene'er you will : invite her to your castle,  
 Oft hath she thither follow'd you—then show  
 That you're a man—then speak as master—keep her  
 Confin'd till she release the Queen of Scots.

LEIC. . I am astonish'd—I am terrified !—  
 Where would your giddy madness hurry you ?  
 Are you acquainted with this country ? Know you  
 The deeps and shallows of this court ? With what  
 A potent spell this female sceptre binds  
 And rules men's spirits round her ? 'Tis in vain  
 You seek th' heroic energy which once  
 Was active in this land !—it is subdued,—  
 A woman holds it under lock and key,  
 And ev'ry spring of courage is relax'd.  
 Follow my counsel—venture nothing rashly.  
 Some one approaches—go—

MORTIMER. And Mary hopes—

Shall I return to her with empty comfort ?

LEIC. . Bear her my vows of everlasting love.

MORT Bear them yourself! I offer'd my assistance  
As her deliv'rer, not your messenger. [Exit.

SCÈNE IX.

**ELIZABETH, LEICESTER.**

ELIZ. . Say who was here? I heard the sound of voices.

LEICESTER (*turning quickly and perplexed round, on hearing the QUEEN*).

It was young Mortimer—

ELIZABETH. How now, my Lord:

Why so confus'd?

LEICESTER (*collecting himself*).

**Your presence is the cause.**

Ne'er did I see thy beauty so resplendent,

My sight is dazzled by thy heavenly charms.

Oh!—

**ELIZABETH.** Whence this sigh ?

LEICESTER. Have I no reason, then,

To sigh? When I behold you in your glory,

I feel anew, with pain unspeakable,

The loss which threatens me.

ELIZABETH. What loss, my Lord?

**LEIC. . Your heart—your own inestimable self:—**

**Soon will you feel yourself within the arms**

Of your young ardent husband, highly bless'd :

He will possess your heart, without a rival.

*He is of royal blood—that am not I.*

Yet, spite of all the world can say, there lives not

One on this globe, who with such fervent zeal

Adores you, as the man who loses you.

Anjou hath never seen you, can but love

**Your glory, and the splendour of your reign :—**

But I love *you*—and were you born, of all

The peasant maids the poorest, I the first

Of kings, I would descend to your condition.

And lay my crown and sceptre at your feet!

ELIZ. . Pity me, my Dudley; do not blame me—  
I cannot ask my heart. Oh, *that* had chosen  
Far otherwise! Ah, how I envy others

Who *can* exalt the object of their love !  
 But I am not so blest :—'tis not my fortune  
 To place upon the brows of him, the dearest  
 Of men to me, the royal crown of England.  
 The Queen of Scotland was allow'd to make  
 Her hand the token of her inclination ;—  
*She* hath had ev'ry freedom, and hath drunk,  
 E'en to the very dregs, the cup of joy.

LEIC. . And now she drinks the bitter cup of sorrow.

ELIZ. . She never did respect the world's opinion ;—  
 Life was to her a sport ;—she never courted  
 The yoke to which I bow'd my willing neck.  
 And yet, methinks, I had as just a claim  
 As she, to please myself, and taste the joys  
 Of life :—but I preferr'd the rigid duties  
 Which royalty imposed on me ;—yet *she*,  
*She* was the favourite of all the men,  
 Because she only strove to be a woman ;  
 And youth and age became alike her suitors.  
 Thus are the men—voluptuaries all !  
 The willing slaves of levity and pleasure ;  
 Value that least which claims their reverence.  
 And did not even Talbot, though grey-headed,  
 Grow young again, when speaking of her charms ?

LEIC. . Forgive him—for he was her keeper once,  
 And she has fool'd him with her cunning wiles.

ELIZ. . And is it really true, that she's so fair ?  
 So often have I been oblig'd to hear  
 The praises of this wonder—it were well  
 If I could learn on what I might depend :  
 Pictures are flattering, and description lies ;—  
 I will trust nothing, but my own conviction.  
 Why gaze you at me thus ?

LEICESTER. . I plac'd in thought  
 You and Maria Stuart, side by side.  
 Yes ! I confess, I oft have felt a wish,  
 If it could be but secretly contriv'd,  
 To see you plac'd beside the Scottish Queen.  
 Then would you feel, and not till then, the full  
 Enjoyment of your triumph :—she deserves  
 To be thus humbled ; she deserves to see,

With her own eyes, and envy's glance is keen,  
Herself surpass'd, to feel herself o'ermatch'd,  
As much by thee in form and princely grace,  
As in each virtue ~~that~~ adorns the sex.

ELIZ. . In years she has th' advantage—

LEICESTER.

Has she so?

I never should have thought it. But her griefs,  
Her sufferings, indeed! 'tis possible,  
Have brought down age upon her ere her time.  
Yes, and 'twould mortify her more to see thee  
As bride—*she* hath already turn'd her back  
On each fair hope of life, and she would see thee  
Advancing tow'ards the open arms of joy—  
See thee as bride of France's royal son.  
She who hath always plumed herself so high  
On her connection with the House of France,  
And still depends upon its mighty aid.

ELIZABETH (*with a careless air*).

I'm teaz'd to grant this interview.

LEICESTER.

She asks it

As a favour; grant it as a punishment.  
For though you should conduct her to the block,  
Yet would it less torment her, than to see  
Herself extinguish'd by your beauty's splendour.  
Thus can you murder her, as she hath wish'd  
To murder you. When she beholds your beauty,  
Guarded by modesty, and beaming bright,  
In the clear glory of unspotted fame,  
(Which *she* with thoughtless levity discarded,)  
Exalted by the splendour of the crown,  
And blooming now with tender bridal graces—  
Then is the hour of her destruction come.  
Yes—when I now behold you—you were never,  
No, never were you so prepar'd to seal  
The triumph of your beauty. As but now  
You enter'd the apartment, I was dazzled  
As by a glorious vision from on high.  
Could you but now, now as you are, appear  
Before her, you could find no better moment.

ELIZ. . Now?—no—not now—no Leicester—this must be  
Maturely weigh'd—I must with Burleigh—



LEICESTER.

Burleigh!

To him you are but Sov'reign, and as such  
Alone he seeks your welfare; but your rights,  
Deriv'd from womanhood, this tender point  
Must be decided by your own tribunal,  
Not by the statesman—yet e'en policy  
Demands that you should see her, and allure,  
By such a gen'rous deed, the public voice. .  
You can hereafter act as it may please you,  
To rid you of the hateful enemy.

ELIZ . But would it then become me to behold

My kinswoman in infamy and want?  
They say she is not royally attended;  
Would not the sight of her distress reproach me?

LEIC. . You need not cross her threshold—hear my counsel:—

A fortunate conjuncture favours it.  
The hunt you mean to honour with your presence  
Is in the neighbourhood of Fotheringay;  
Permission may be giv'n to Lady Stuart  
To take the air; you meet her in the park,  
As if by accident; it must not seem  
To have been plann'd, and should you not incline,  
You need not speak to her

ELIZABETH.

If I am foolish,

Be yours the fault, not mine. I would not care  
To-day to cross your wishes; for to-day  
I've griev'd you more than all my other subjects.

[Tenderly.

Let it then be your fancy. Leicester, hence  
You see the free obsequiousness of love,  
Which suffers that which it cannot approve.

[LEICESTER prostrates himself before her, and the  
curtain falls.

## ACT III.

## SCENE I.

*In a Park.—In the foreground Trees; in the background a distant Prospect.*

MARY advances, running from behind the Trees: HANNAH  
KENNEDY follows slowly.

KEN. You hasten on as if endow'd with wings—  
I cannot follow you so swiftly—wait.

MARY. Freedom returns! O let me enjoy it,—  
Let me be childish,—be childish with me!  
Freedom invites me! O let me employ it,  
Skimming with winged step light o'er the lea;  
Have I escaped from this mansion of mourning?  
Holds me no more the sad dungeon of care?  
Let me, with joy and with eagerness burning,  
Drink in the free, the celestial air!

KEN. O, my dear Lady! but a very little  
Is your sad gaol extended; you behold not  
The wall that shuts us in; these plaited tufts  
Of trees hide from your sight the hated object.

MARY. Thanks to these friendly trees, that hide from me  
My prison walls, and flatter my illusion!  
Happy I now may dream myself, and free;  
Why wake me from my dream's so sweet confusion?  
'The extended vault of heaven around me lies,  
Free and unfetter'd range my wandering eyes  
O'er space's vast immeasurable sea!  
From where yon misty mountains rise on high,  
I can my empire's boundaries explore;  
And those light clouds which, steering southwards, fly,  
Seek the mild clime of France's genial shore.

Fast fleeting clouds! ye meteors that fly;  
Could I but with you sail through the sky!  
Tenderly greet the dear land of my youth!  
Here I am captive! oppress'd by my foes,  
No other than you may carry my woes,  
Free thro' the ether your pathway is seen,  
Ye own not the power of this tyrant Queen.

KEN. . Alas! dear Lady! You're beside yourself,

- This long-lost, long-sought freedom makes you rave.
- MARY. . Yonder's a fisher returning to home ;—  
Poor though it be, would he lend me his wherry,  
Quick to congenial shores would I ferry.  
Spare is his trade, and labour's his doom—  
Rich would I freight his vessel with treasure,  
Such a draught should be his as he never had seen,  
Wealth should he find in his nets without measure,  
Would he but rescue a poor captive Queen.
- KEN. . Fond, fruitless wishes ! See you not from far,  
How we are follow'd by observing spies ?—  
A dismal, barb'rous prohibition scares  
Each sympathetic being from our path.
- MARY. . No, gentle Hannah ! Trust me, not in vain  
My prison gates are open'd. This small grace  
Is harbinger of greater happiness. ' . .  
No ! I mistake not—'tis the active hand  
Of love to which I owe this kind indulgence  
I recognise in this the mighty arm  
Of Leicester. They will by degrees expand  
My prison ; will accustom me, through small,  
To greater liberty, until at last  
I shall behold the face of him whose hand  
Will dash my fetters off, and that for ever.
- KEN. . O, my dear Queen ! I cannot reconcile  
These contradictions. 'Twas but yesterday  
That they announc'd your death, and all at once,  
To-day, you have such liberty. Their chains  
Are also loos'd, as I have oft been told,  
Whom everlasting liberty awaits.
- [*Hunting horns at a distance.*]
- MARY. . Hear'st thou the bugle, so blithely resounding ?  
Hear'st thou its echoes through wood and through plain ?  
Oh, might I now, on my nimble steed bounding,  
Join with the jocund, the frolicsome train !
- [*Hunting horns again heard.*]
- Again ! O this sad and this pleasing remembrance !  
These are the sounds, which, so sprightly and clear,  
Oft, when with music the hounds and the horn,  
So cheerfully welcom'd the break of the morn,  
On the heaths of the Highlands delighted my ear.

## SCENE II.

*Enter PAULET.*

PAUL. . Well! have I acted right at last, my Lady?  
Do I for once, at least, deserve your thanks?

MARY. . How! Do I owe this favour, Sir, to you?

PAUL. . Why not to me? I visited the Court,  
And gave the Queen your letter.

MARY. . Did you give it?

In very truth did you deliver it?  
And is this freedom which I now enjoy,  
The happy consequence?

PAULET (*significantly*). Nor that alone;  
Prepare yourself to see a greater still.

MARY. . A greater still! What do you mean by that?

PAUL. . You heard the bugle-horns?

MARY (*starting back with foreboding apprehension*).

You frighten me—

PAUL. . The Queen is hunting in the neighbourhood—

MARY. . What!

PAUL. . In a few moments she'll appear before you.

KENNEDY (*hastening towards MARY, and about to fall*).

How fare you, dearest Lady?—you grow pale.

PAUL. . How? Is't not well? Was it not then your pray'r?

'Tis granted now, before it was expected;  
You who had ever such a ready speech,  
Now summon all your powers of eloquence,  
The important time to use them now is come.

MARY. . O, why was I not told of this before?

Now I am not prepar'd for it—not now—

What, as the greatest favour, I besought,  
Seems to me now most fearful:—Hannah, come,  
Lead me into the house, till I collect  
My spirits.

PAULET. . Stay;—you must await her here.

Yes!—I believe you may be well alarm'd  
To stand before your judge.

## SCENE III.

*Enter the EARL OF SHREWSBURY.*

MARY. . 'Tis not for that,  
O God! Far other thoughts possess me now.

O, worthy Shrewsbury! You come, as though  
You were an angel sent to me from heav'n.  
I cannot, will not see her. Save me, save me  
From the detested sight!

SHREWSBURY.

Your Majesty,

Command yourself, and summon all your courage,  
'Tis the decisive moment of your fate.

MARY. . For years I've waited, and prepared myself.  
For this I've studied, weigh'd, and written down  
Each word within the tablet of my mem'ry,  
That was to touch, and move her to compassion.  
Forgotten suddenly, effac'd is all,  
And nothing lives within me at this moment,  
But the fierce, burning feeling of my wrongs.  
My heart is turn'd to direst hate against her;  
All gentle thoughts, all sweet forgiving words  
Are gone, and round me stand with grisly mien,  
The fiends of hell, and shake their snaky locks!

SHREW. Command your wild, rebellious blood;—constrain  
The bitterness which fills your heart. No good  
Ensues, when hatred is oppos'd to hate.  
How much soe'er the inward struggle cost,  
You must submit to stern necessity,  
The pow'r is in her hand, be therefore humble.

MARY. . To her? I never can.

SHREWSBURY.

But pray, submit.

Speak with respect, with calmness! Strive to move  
Her magnanimity; insist not, now,  
Upon your rights, not now—'tis not the season.

MARY. . Ah! wo is me! I've pray'd for my destruction,  
And, as a curse to me, my prayer is heard.  
We never should have seen each other—never!—  
O, this can never, never come to good.  
Rather in love could fire and water meet,  
The timid lamb embrace the roaring tiger!—  
I have been hurt too grievously; she hath  
Too grievously oppress'd me;—no atonement  
Can make us friends!

SHREWSBURY.

'First see her, face to face:

Did I not see how she was mov'd at reading  
Your letter? How her eyes were drown'd in tears?  
No—she is not unfeeling; only place

More confidence in her. It was ~~for~~ this  
That I came on before her, to entreat you,  
To be collected—to admonish you—

MARY (*seizing his hand*).

Oh, Talbot! you have ever been my friend,  
Had I but stay'd beneath your kindly care!  
They have, indeed, misused me, Shrewsbury.

SHREW. Let all be now forgot, and only think  
How to receive her with submissiveness.

MARY. Is Burleigh with her too, my evil genius?

SHREW. No one attends her but the Earl of Leicester.

MARY. Lord Leicester?

SHREWSBURY. Fear not him; it is not he  
Who wishes your destruction;—'twas his work,  
That here the Queen hath granted you this meeting.

MARY. Ah! well I knew it.

SHREWSBURY. What?

PAULET. The Queen approaches.  
[*They all draw aside; MARY alone remains, leaning  
on KENNEDY.*]

#### SCENE IV.

*The same, ELIZABETH, EARL OF LEICESTER, and Retinue.*

ELIZABETH (*to LEICESTER*).

What seat is that, my Lord?

LEICESTER.

'Tis Fotheringay.

ELIZABETH (*to SHREWSBURY*).

My Lord, send back our retinue to London;  
The people crowd too eager in the roads,  
We'll seek a refuge in this quiet park.

[*TALBOT sends the train away. She looks steadfastly  
at MARY, as she speaks further with PAULET.*]

My honest people love me overmuch.  
These signs of joy are quite idolatrous.  
Thus should a God be honour'd, not a mortal

MARY (*who the whole time had leaned, almost fainting, on  
KENNEDY, rises now, and her eyes meet the steady,  
piercing look of ELIZABETH; she shudders and  
throws herself again upon KENNEDY's bosom*).

O God! from out these features speaks no heart.

ELIZ. What lady's that?—

[*A general, embarrassed silence.*]

LEICESTER.

You are at Fotheringay,

My Liege!

ELIZABETH (*as if surprised, casting an angry look at LEICESTER*).

Who hath done this, my Lord of Leicester?

LEIC. . Tis past, my Queen;—and now that Heav'n hath led  
Your footsteps hither, be magnanimous;  
And let sweet pity be triumphant now.SHREW. O royal mistress! yield to our entreaties;  
O cast your eyes on this unhappy one,  
Who stands dissolved in anguish.

[MARY collects herself, and begins to advance towards ELIZABETH, stops shuddering at half way:—her action expresses the most violent internal struggle.

ELIZABETH.

How, my Lords!

Which of you then announc'd to me a prisoner  
Bow'd down by wo? I see a haughty one,  
By no means humbled by calamity.

MARY. . Well be it so:—to this will I submit.

Farewell high thought, and pride of noble mind!  
I will forget my dignity, and all  
My sufferings; I will fall before *her* feet,  
Who hath reduced me to this wretchedness.

[She turns towards the QUEEN.

The voice of Heaven decides for you, my sister.  
Your happy brows are now with triumph crown'd,  
I bless the Power Divine, which thus hath rais'd you.

[She kneels.

But in your turn be merciful, my sister;  
Let me not lie before you thus disgraced;  
Stretch forth your hand, your royal hand, to raise  
Your sister from the depths of her distress.

ELIZABETH (*stepping back*).

You are where it becomes you, Lady Stuart;  
And thankfully I prize my God's protection,  
Who hath not suffer'd me to kneel a suppliant  
Thus at your feet, as you now kneel at mine

MARY (*with increasing energy of feeling*).

Think on all earthly things, vicissitudes.  
Oh! there are gods who punish haughty pride:  
Respect them, honour them, the dreadful ones

Who thus before thy feet have humbled me!  
 Before these strangers' eyes, dishonour not  
 Yourself in me: profane not, nor disgrace  
 The royal blood of 'Tudor. In my veins  
 It flows as pure a stream, as in your own.  
 O! for God's pity, stand not so estranged  
 And inaccessible, like some tall cliff,  
 Which the poor shipwreck'd mariner in vain  
 Struggles to seize, and labours to embrace.  
 My all, my life, my fortune now depends  
 Upon the influence of my words and tears;  
 That I may touch your heart, O! set mine free.  
 If you regard me with those icy looks,  
 My shudd'ring heart contracts itself, the stream  
 Of tears is dried, and frigid horror chains  
 The words of supplication in my bosom!

ELIZABETH (*cold and severe*).

What would you say to me, my Lady Stuart?  
 You wish'd to speak with me; and I, forgetting  
 The Queen, and all the wrongs I have sustain'd,  
 Fulfil the pious duty of the sister,  
 And grant the boon you wished for of my presence.  
 Yet I, in yielding to the gen'rous feelings  
 Of magnanimity, expose myself  
 To rightful censure, that I stoop so low.  
 For well you know, you would have had me murder'd.

MARY. O! how shall I begin? O, how shall I  
 So artfully arrange my cautious words,  
 That they may touch, yet not offend your heart?—  
 Strengthen my words, O Heav'n! and take from them  
 Whate'er might wound. Alas! I cannot speak  
 In my own cause, without impeaching you,  
 And that most heavily, I wish not so;  
 You have not, as you ought, behav'd to me;  
 I am a Queen, like you, yet you have held me  
 Confin'd in prison. As a suppliant  
 I came to you, yet *you* in me insulted  
 The pious use of hospitality;  
 Slighting in me the holy law of nations,  
 Immur'd me in a dungeon—tore from me  
 My friends and servants; to unseemly want



I was exposed, and hurried to the bar  
 Of a disgraceful, insolent tribunal.  
 No more of this ;—in everlasting silence  
 Be buried all the cruelties I suffer'd !  
 See—I will throw the blame of all on fate,  
 'Twas not your fault, no more than it was mine.  
 An evil spirit rose from the abyss,  
 To kindle in our hearts the flames of hate,  
 By which our tender youth had been divided.  
 It grew with us, and bad designing men  
 Fann'd with their ready breath the fatal fire :  
 Frantics, enthusiasts, with sword and dagger  
 Arm'd the uncall'd-for hand ! This is the curse  
 Of kings, that they, divided, tear the world  
 In pieces with their hatred, and let loose  
 The raging furies of all hellish strife !  
 No foreign tongue is now between us, sister,  
*[Approaching her confidently, and with a flattering tone.]*

Now stand we face to face ; now, sister, speak ;  
 Name but my crime, I'll fully satisfy you,—  
 Alas ! had you vouchsaf'd to hear me then,  
 When I so earnest sought to meet your eye,  
 It never would have come to this, nor would,  
 Here in this mournful place, have happen'd now  
 This so distressful, this so mournful meeting.

ELLIZ. . My better stars preserv'd me. I was warn'd,  
 And laid not to my breast the pois'nous adder !  
 Accuse not fate ! your own deceitful heart  
 It was, the wild ambition of your house :  
 As yet no enmities had pass'd between us,  
 When your imperious uncle, the proud priest,  
 Whose shameless hand grasps at all crowns, attack'd  
 me

With unprovok'd hostility, and taught  
 You, but too docile, to assume my arms,  
 To vest yourself with my imperial title,  
 And meet me in the lists in mortal strife :  
 What arms employ'd he not to storm my throne ?  
 The curses of the priests, the people's sword,  
 The dreadful weapons of religious frenzy ;—

Ev'n here in my own kingdom's peaceful haunts,  
He fann'd the flames of civil insurrection ;—  
But God is with me, and the haughty priest  
Has not maintain'd the field. The blow was aim'd  
Full at my head, but yours it is which falls !

MARY. . I'm in the hand of Heav'n. You never will  
Exert so cruelly the pow'r it gives you.

ELIZ. . Who shall prevent me ? Say, did not your uncle  
Set all the kings of Europe the example,  
How to conclude a peace with those they hate.  
Be mine the school of Saint Bartholomew ;  
What 's kindred then to me, or nations' laws ?  
The church can break the bands of ev'ry duty ;  
It consecrates the regicide, the traitor ;  
I only practise what your priests have taught !  
Say then, what surety can be offer'd me,  
Should I magnanimously loose your bonds ?  
Say, with what lock can I secure your faith,  
Which by St. Peter's keys cannot be open'd ?  
Force is my only surety ; no alliance  
Can be concluded with a race of vipers.

MARY. . O ! this is but your wretched, dark suspicion !  
For you have constantly regarded me  
But as a stranger, and an enemy,  
Had you declar'd me heir to your dominions,  
As is my right, then gratitude and love  
In me had fix'd, for you, a faithful friend  
And kinswoman.

ELIZABETH.           Your friendship is abroad,  
' Your house is Papacy, the monk your brother.  
Name *you* my successor ! The treach'rous snare !  
That in my life you might seduce my people ;  
And, like a sly Armida, in your net  
Entangle all our noble English youth ;  
That all might turn to the new rising sun,  
And I—

MARY.               O sister, rule your realm in peace :  
I give up ev'ry claim to these domains—  
Alas ! the pinions of my soul are lam'd ;  
Greatness entices me no more : your point  
Is gain'd ; I am but Mary's shadow now—

My noble spirit is at last broke down  
By long captivity:—you've done your worst  
On me; you have destroy'd me in my bloom!  
Now, end your work, my sister;—speak at length  
The word, which to pronounce has brought you hither;  
For I will ne'er believe, that you are come,  
To mock unfeelingly your hapless victim.  
Pronounce this word:—say, "Mary, you are free:  
You have already felt my pow'r,—learn now  
To honour too my generosity."  
Say this, and I will take my life, will take  
My freedom, as a present from your hands.  
One word makes all undone;—I wait for it;—  
O let it not be needlessly delay'd.  
Wo to you, if you end not with this word!  
For should you not, like some divinity,  
Dispensing noble blessings, quit me now,  
Then, sister, not for all this island's wealth,  
For all the realms encircled by the deep,  
Would I exchange my present lot for yours.

ELIZ. . And you confess at last, that you are conquer'd:  
Are all your schemes run out? No more assassins  
Now on the road? Will no adventurer  
Attempt again, for you, the sad achievement?  
Yes, madam, it is over:—You'll seduce  
No mortal more. The world has other cares;—  
None is ambitious of the dang'rous honour  
Of being your fourth husband:—You destroy  
Your wooers like your husbands.

MARY (*starting angrily*). Sister, sister!—  
Grant me forbearance, all ye pow'r's of heav'n!

ELIZABETH (*regards her long, with a look of proud contempt*).  
Those then, my Lord of Leicester, are the charms,  
Which no man with impunity can view,  
Near which no woman dare attempt to stand?  
In sooth, this honour has been cheaply gain'd;  
She who to all is common, may with ease  
Become the common object of applause

MARY. . This is too much!

ELIZABETH (*laughing insultingly*).

You show us now, indeed,

Your real face ; till now 'twas but the mask.

MARY (*burning with rage, yet dignified and noble*).

My sins were human, and the faults of youth ;  
Superior force misled me. I have never  
Denied or sought to hide it : I despis'd,  
All false appearance as became a Queen.  
The worst of me is known, and I can say,  
That I am better than the fame I bear.  
Wo to you ! when, in time to come, the world  
Shall draw the robe of honour from your deeds,  
With which thy arch-hypocrisy has veil'd  
The raging flames of lawless secret lust.  
Virtue was not your portion from your mother ;  
Well know we what it was which brought the head  
Of Anna Boleyn to the fatal block.

SHREWSBURY (*stepping between both QUEENS*).

O ! Heav'n ! Alas, and must it come to this !  
Is this the moderation, the submission,  
My Lady ?—

MARY.

Moderation ! I've supported  
What human nature can support : farewell,  
Lamb-hearted resignation, passive patience,  
Fly to thy native heaven ; burst at length  
Thy bonds, come forward from thy dreary cave,  
In all thy fury, long-suppressed rancour !  
And thou, who to the anger'd basilisk  
Impart'st the murd'rous glance, O, arm my tongue  
With poison'd darts !

SHREWSBURY.

She is beside herself !  
Exasperated, mad ! My Liege, forgive her.

[ELIZABETH, *speechless with anger, casts enraged  
looks at Mary.*

LEICESTER (*in the most violent agitation ; he seeks to lead  
ELIZABETH away*).

Attend not to her rage ! Away, away,  
From this disastrous place !

MARY (*raising her voice*).

A bastard soils,  
Profanes the English throne ! The gen'rous Britons  
Arc cheated by a juggler, whose whole figure  
Is false and painted, heart as well as face !  
If right prevail'd, you now would in the dust

Before me lie, for I'm your rightful monarch!

[*ELIZABETH hastily quits the stage; the Lords follow her in the greatest consternation.*

SCENE V.

MARY, KENNEDY.

KEN. . . What have you done? She has gone hence in wrath.  
All hope is over now!

MARY (*still quite beside herself*).

Gone hence in wrath!

She carries death within her heart! I know it.

[*Falling on KENNEDY'S bosom.*

Now I am happy, Hannah! and, at last,

After whole years of sorrow and abasement,

One moment of victorious revenge!

A weight falls off my heart, a weight of mountains;

I plung'd the steel in my oppressor's breast!

KEN. . . Unhappy Lady! Frenzy overcomes you.

Yes, you have wounded your invet'rate foe;

'Tis she who wields the light'ning, she is Queen,

You have insulted her before her minion.

MARY. . I have abas'd her before Leicester's eyes;

He saw it, he was witness of my triumph.

How did I hurl her from her haughty height,

He saw it, and his presence strengthen'd me.

SCENE VI.

*Enter MORTIMER.*

KEN. . . O Sir! What an occurrence!

MORTIMER.

I heard all—

[*Gives the nurse a sign to repair to her post, and draws nearer; his whole appearance expresses the utmost violence of passion.*

Thine is the palm;—thou trod'st her to the dust!—

'Thou wast the Queen, she was the malefactor;—

I am transported with thy noble courage;—

Yes! I adore thee; like a Deity,

My sense is dazzled by thy heav'nly beams.

MARY (*with vivacity and expectation*).

You spoke with Leicester, gave my letter to him.—

My present too?—O speak, Sir.

MORTIMER (*beholding her with glowing looks*).

How thy noble,

Thy royal indignation shone, and cast  
A glory round thy beauty; yes, by Heavens,  
Thou art the fairest woman upon earth!

MARY. . Sir, satisfy, I beg you, my impatience;  
What says his Lordship? Say, Sir, may I hope?

MORT. . Who?—he?—he is a wretch, a very coward,  
Hope nought from him; despise him, and forget him!

MARY. . What say you?

MORTIMER. He deliver, and possess you!  
Why let him dare it:—he!—he must with me  
In mortal contest first deserve the prize!

MARY. . You gave him not my letter? Then, indeed,  
My hopes are lost!

MORTIMER. The coward loves his life.  
Whoe'er would rescue you, and call you his,  
Must boldly dare affront e'en death itself!

MARY. . Will he do nothing for me?

MORTIMER. Speak not of him.  
What can he do? What need have we of him?  
I will release you; I alone.

MARY. Alas!

What pow'r have you?

MORTIMER. Deceive yourself no more;

Think not your case is now as formerly;  
The moment that the Queen thus quitted you,  
And that your interview had ta'en this turn,  
All hope was lost, each way of mercy shut.  
Now deeds must speak, now boldness must decide;  
To compass all must all be hazarded;  
You must be free before the morning break.

MARY. . What say you, Sir—to-night?—impossible!

MORT. . Hear what has been resolv'd:—I led my friends  
Into a private chapel, where a priest  
Heard our confession, and, for ev'ry sin  
We had committed, gave us absolution;  
He gave us absolution too, beforehand,  
For ev'ry crime we might commit in future;  
He gave us too the final sacrament,  
And we are ready for the final journey.

MARY. . O ! what an awful, dreadful preparation !

MORT. . We scale, this very night, the castle's walls ;  
The keys are in my pow'r ; the guards we murder !  
Then from thy chamber bear thee forcibly.  
Each living soul must die beneath our hands,  
That none remain who might disclose the deed.

MARY. . And Drury, Paulet, my two keepers, they  
Would sooner spill their dearest drop of blood.

MORT. . They fall the very first beneath my steel.

MARY. . What, Sir ! Your uncle ? How ! Your second father !

MORT. . Must perish by my hand—I murder him !

MARY. O, bloody outrage !

MORTIMER.                               We have been absolv'd  
Beforehand ; I may perpetrate the worst ;—  
I can, I will do so !

MARY.                                       O dreadful, dreadful !

MORT. . And should I be oblig'd to kill the Queen,  
I've sworn upon the host, it must be done !

MARY. . No, Mortimer ; ere so much blood for me.—

MORT. . What is the life of all, compar'd to thee,  
And to my love ? The bond which holds the world  
Together may be loos'd, a second deluge  
Come rolling on, and swallow all creation !  
Henceforth I value nothing ; ere I quit  
My hold on thee, may earth and time be ended !

MARY (*retiring*).

Heav'n's ! Sir, what language, and what looks ! They  
scarcely  
They frighten me !

MORTIMER (*with unsteady looks, expressive of quiet madness*).

Life 's but a moment—death  
Is but a moment too. Why ! let them drag me  
To Tyburn, let them tear me limb from limb,  
With red-hot pincers—  
[*Violently approaching her with extended arms.*

If I clasp but thee  
Within my arms, thou fervently belov'd !

MARY. . Madman, avaunt !

MORTIMER.                               To rest upon this bosom,  
To press upon this passion-breathing mouth—

MARY. . Leave me, for God's sake, Sir ; let me go in—

MORT. . He is a madman who neglects to clasp

His bliss in folds that never may be loosed,  
 When Heav'n has kindly giv'n it to his arms.  
 I will deliver you, and though it cost  
 A thousand lives, I do it: but I swear,  
 As God 's in Heav'n, I will possess you too!

MARY. O! Will no God, no angel shelter me?  
 Dread destiny! thou throw'st me, in thy wrath,  
 From one tremendous terror to the other!  
 Was I then born to waken nought but frenzy?  
 Do hate and love conspire alike to fright me?

MORT. Yes, glowing as their hatred is my love;  
 They would behead thee, they would wound this neck,  
 So dazzling white, with the disgraceful axe!  
 O! offer to the living god of joy  
 What thou must sacrifice to bloody hate!  
 Inspire thy happy lover with those charms  
 Which are no more thine own. Those golden locks  
 Are forfeit to the dismal pow'rs of death,  
 O! use them to entwine thy slave for ever!

MARY. Alas! alas! what language must I hear!  
 My wo, my sufferings should be sacred to you,  
 Although my royal brows are so no more.

MORT. The crown is fallen from thy brows, thou hast  
 No more of earthly majesty. Make tria!,  
 Raise thy imperial voice, see if a friend,  
 If a deliverer will rise to save you.  
 Thy moving form alone remains, the high,  
 The godlike influence of thy heav'nly beauty;  
 This bids me venture all, this arms my hand  
 With might, and drives me tow'rd's the headsman's axe!

MARY. O! Who will save me from his raging madness?

MORT. Service that's bold, demands a bold reward.  
 Why shed their blood the daring? Is not life  
 Life's highest good? And he a madman, who  
 Casts life away? First will I take my rest,  
 Upon the breast that glows with love's own fire!

*[He presses her violently to his bosom.]*

MARY. Oh, must I call for help against the man  
 Who would deliver me!

MORTIMER. Thou'rt not unfeeling,  
 The world ne'er censur'd thee for frigid rigour;  
 The fervent pray'r of love can touch thy heart.



Thou mad'st the minstrel Rizzio blest, and gavest  
Thyself a willing prey to Bothwell's arms.

MARY. . Presumptuous man!

MORTIMER. *He was indeed thy tyrant,*  
Thou trembled'st at his rudeness, whilst thou lov'd'st  
him;  
Well then—if only terror can obtain thee—  
By the infernal gods!

MARY. *Away—you're mad!*

MORT. . I'll teach thee then before *me* too to tremble—

KENNEDY (*entering suddenly*).

They're coming—they approach—the Park is fill'd  
With men in arms.

MORTIMER (*starting, and catching at his sword*).

I will defend you—I—

MARY. . O Hannah! save me, save me from his hands.

Where shall I find, poor sufferer, an asylum?

O! to what saint shall I address my pray'rs?

Here force assails me, and within is murder!

[*She flies towards the house, KENNEDY follows her.*

SCENE VII.

MORTIMER, PAULET, and DRURY *rush in in the greatest consternation.—Attendants hasten over the Stage.*

PAUL. . Shut all the portals—draw the bridges up—

MORT. . What is the matter, uncle?

PAULET. *Where is the murd'ress?*

Down with her, down into the darkest dungeon!

MORT. . What is the matter? What has pass'd?

PAULET. *The Queen!*

Accursed hand! Infernal machination!

MORT. . The Queen! What Queen?

PAUL. *What Queen!*

*The Queen of England;—*

She has been murder'd on the road to London.

[*Hastens into the house.*

SCENE VIII.

MORTIMER, *soon after*, O'KELLY.

MORTIMER (*after a pause*).

Am I then mad? Came not one running by

But now, and cried aloud, The Queen is murder'd!

No, no! I did but dream. A fev'rish fancy  
 Paints that upon my mind as true and real,  
 Which but existed in my frantic thoughts.  
 Who's there? It is O'Kelly. So dismay'd!

O'KELLY (*rushing in*).

Flee, Mortimer, O! flee—for all is lost!

MORT. . What then is lost?

O'KELLY. Stand not on question. Think  
 On speedy flight.

MORTIMER. What has occurred?

O'KELLY. Sauvage,  
 That madman, struck the blow.

MORTIMER. It is then true!

O'KEL. True, true—O! save yourself.

MORTIMER (*exultingly*).

The Queen is murder'd—

And Mary shall ascend the English throne!

O'KEL. Is murder'd! Who said that?

MORTIMER. Yourself.

O'KELLY. She lives,  
 And I, and you, and all of us are lost.

MORT. . She lives!

O'KELLY. The blow was badly aim'd, her cloak  
 Receiv'd it. Shrewsbury disarm'd the murd'rer.

MORT. . She lives!

O'KELLY. She lives to whelm us all in ruin;

Come, they surround the park already; come—

MORT. . Who did this frantic deed?

O'KELLY. It was the monk  
 From Toulon, whom you saw immers'd in thought,  
 As in the chapel the Pope's bull was read,  
 Which pour'd anathemas upon the Queen.  
 He wish'd to take the nearest, shortest way,  
 To free, with one bold stroke, the church of God,  
 And gain the crown of martyrdom:—he trusted  
 His purpose only to the priest, and struck  
 The fatal blow upon the road to London.

MORTIMER (*after a long silence*).

Alas! a fierce destructive fate pursues thee,  
 Unhappy one! Yes—now thy death is fix'd;  
 Thy very angel has prepar'd thy fall!

- O'KEL. Say, whither will you take your flight? I go  
To hide me in the forests of the north.  
MORT. . Fly thither, and may God attend your flight;  
I will remain, and still attempt to save  
My love; if not, my bed shall be upon her grave.  
[*Exeunt at different sides.*]

## ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Antechamber.*

COUNT AUBESPINE, *the* EARLS of KENT and LEICESTER.

- AUB. . How fares her Majesty? My Lords, you see me  
Still stunn'd, and quite beside myself for terror?  
How happen'd it? How was it possible  
That, in the midst of this most loyal people—,  
LEIC. . The deed was not attempted by the people.  
The assassin was a subject of your king,  
A Frenchman.

AUBESPINE. Sure a lunatic.

LEIC. A Papist,  
Count Aubespine!

## SCENE II.

*Enter BURLEIGH in conversation with DAVISON.*

- BURLEIGH. Sir; let the death-warrant  
Be instantly made out, and pass the seal;  
Then let it be presented to the Queen;  
Her Majesty must sign it. Hasten, Sir,  
We have no time to lose.

DAVISON. It shall be done. [*Exit.*]

- AUB. . My Lord High Treasurer, my faithful heart  
Shares in the just rejoicings of the realm.  
Prais'd be almighty Heaven, who hath averted  
Assassination from our much-lov'd Queen!  
BUR. . Prais'd be his name, who thus hath turn'd to scorn  
The malice of our foes!  
AUBESPINE. May Heav'n confound  
The perpetrator of this cursed deed!  
BUR. . Its perpetrator and its base contriver!  
AUB. . Please you, my Lord, to bring me to the Queen,  
That I may lay the warm congratulations  
Of my imperial master at her feet.

BUR. There is no need of this.

AUBESPINE (*officially*).

My Lord of Burleigh,

I know my duty.

BURLEIGH.

Sir, your duty is

To quit, and that without delay, this kingdom.

AUBESPINE (*stepping back with surprise*).

What! How is this?

BURLEIGH.

The sacred character

Of an Ambassador to-day protects you,

But not to-morrow.

AUBESPINE.

What's my crime?

BURLEIGH.

Should I

Once name it, there were then no pardon for it.

AUB. . I hope, my Lord, my charge's privilege—

BUR. . Screens not a traitor.

LEICESTER and KENT.

Traitor! How?

AUBESPINE.

My Lord,

Consider well—

BURLEIGH.

Your passport was discover'd

In the assassin's pocket.

KENT.

Righteous Heaven!

AUB. . Sir, many passports are subscrib'd by me,

I cannot know the secret thoughts of men.

BUR. . He in your house confess'd, and was absolv'd—

AUB. . My house is open—

BURLEIGH.

To *our* enemies.

AUB. . I claim a strict inquiry—

BURLEIGH.

Tremble at it—

AUB. . My monarch in my person is insulted,

He will annul the marriage contract.

BURLEIGH.

*That*

My royal mistress has annull'd already;

England will not unite herself with France.

My Lord of Kent, I give to you the charge

To see Count Aubespine embark'd in safety

The furious populace has storm'd his palace,

Where a whole arsenal of arms was found;

Should he be found, they'll tear him limb from limb,

Conceal him till their fury is abated,—

You answer for his life.

AUBESPINE.

I go—I leave

This kingdom, where they sport with public treaties,  
And trample on the laws of nations. Yet  
My monarch, be assur'd, will vent his rage  
In direst vengeance!

BURLEIGH.

Let him seek it here.

[*Exeunt KENT and AUBESPINE.*]

## SCENE III

LEICESTER, BURLEIGH.

LEIC. . And thus you loose, yourself, the knot of union  
Which you officiously, uncall'd for, bound!  
You have deserv'd but little of your country,  
My Lord; this trouble was superfluous.

BUR. . My aim was good, though fate declared against it;  
Happy is he who has so fair a conscience!

LEIC. . Well know we the mysterious mien of Burleigh,  
When he is on the hunt for deeds of treason.  
Now you are in your element, my Lord;  
A monstrous outrage has been just committed,  
And darkness veils, as yet, its perpetrators:—  
Now will a court of inquisition rise;  
Each word, each look be weigh'd; men's very thoughts  
Be summon'd to the bar. You are, my Lord,  
The mighty man, the Atlas of the state,  
All England's weight lies upon your shoulders.

BUR. . In you, my Lord, I recognise my master;  
For such a victory as your eloquence  
Has gain'd I cannot boast.

LEICESTER.

What means your lordship?

BUR. . You were the man who knew, behind my back,  
To lure the Queen to Fotheringay castle.

LEIC. . Behind your back! When did I fear to act  
Before your face?

BURLEIGH.

You led her Majesty?

O, no—you led her not—it was the Queen  
Who was so gracious as to lead *you* thither.

LEIC. . What do you mean, my Lord, by that?

BURLEIGH.

The noble part

You forc'd the Queen to play! The glorious triumph  
Which you prepar'd for her! Too gracious princess!  
So shamelessly, so wantonly to mock

Thy unsuspecting goodness, to betray thee  
 So pitiless to thy exulting foe!  
 This, then, is the magnanimity, the grace  
 Which suddenly possess'd you in the council!  
 The Stuart is for this so despicable,  
 So weak an enemy, that it would scarce  
 Be worth the pains to stain us with her blood.  
 A specious plan! and sharply pointed too;  
 'Tis only pity this sharp point is broken.

LEIC. Unworthy wretch!—this instant follow me,  
 And answer at the throne this insolence.

BUR. You'll find me there, my Lord; and look you well,  
 That *there* your eloquence desert you not. *[Exit.]*

## SCENE IV.

LEICESTER, *alone*; then MORTIMER.

LEIC. I am detected! All my plot's disclos'd!  
 How has my evil genius track'd my steps!  
 Alas! if he has proofs, if she should learn  
 That I have held a secret correspondence  
 With her worst enemy; how criminal  
 Shall I appear to her! How false will then  
 My counsel seem, and all the fatal pains  
 I took to lure the Queen to Fotheringay!  
 I've shamefully betray'd, I have exposed her  
 To her detested enemy's revilings!  
 O! never, never can she pardon that.  
 All will appear as if premeditated.  
 The bitter turn of this sad interview,  
 The triumph and the tauntings of her rival;  
 Yes, e'en the murd'rous hand, which had prepar'd  
 A bloody, monstrous, unexpected fate;  
 All, all will be ascrib'd to my suggestions!  
 I see no rescue!—nowhere—Ha! Who comes?

*[MORTIMER enters, in the most violent uneasiness,  
 and looks with apprehension round him.]*

MORT. . Lord Leicester! Is it you? Are we alone?

LEIC. . Ill-fated wretch, away! What seek you here?

MORT. . They are upon our track—upon yours too,  
 Be vigilant!

LEICESTER Away, away!

- MORTIMER. They know,  
That private conferences have been held  
At Aubespine's—
- LEICESTER. What's that to me?
- MORTIMER. They know, too,  
That the assassin—
- LEICESTER. That is your affair—  
Audacious wretch! to dare to mix my name  
In your detested outrage: go; defend  
Your bloody deeds yourself!
- MORTIMER. But only hear me.
- LEICESTER (*violently enraged*).  
Down, down to hell! Why cling you at my heels  
Like an infernal spirit! I disclaim you—  
I know you not—I make no common cause  
With murderers!
- MORTIMER. You will not hear me, then!  
I came to warn you—*you* too are detected.
- LEIC. How! What?
- MORTIMER. Lord Burleigh went to Fotheringay,  
Just as the luckless deed had been attempted;  
Search'd with strict scrutiny the Queen's apartments,  
And found there—
- LEICESTER. What?
- MORTIMER. A letter, which the Queen  
Had just addressed to you—
- LEICESTER. Unhappy woman!—
- MORT. . In which she calls on you to keep your word,  
Renews the promise of her hand, and mentions  
The picture which she sent you.
- LEICESTER. Death and hell!
- MORT. . Lord Burleigh has the letter—
- LEICESTER. I am lost!  
[*During the following speech of MORTIMER,  
LEICESTER goes up and down, as in despair.*]
- MORT. . Improve the moment; be beforehand with him,  
And save yourself—save her! An oath can clear  
Your fame; contrive excuses to avert  
The worst. I am disarm'd, can do no more;  
My comrades are dispers'd—to pieces fall'n  
Our whole confed'racy. For Scotland I,

To rally such new friends as there I may.

'Tis now your turn, my Lord—try what your weight,  
What bold assurance can effect.

LEICESTER (*stops suddenly, as if resolved*). I will—

[*Goes to the door, opens it, and calls.*

Who waits without? Guards! seize this wretched  
traitor!

[*To the Officer, who comes in with soldiers.*

And guard him closely! A most dreadful plot

Is brought to light—I'll to her Majesty.

MORTIMER (*stands for a time petrified with wonder; collects  
himself soon, and follows LEICESTER with his  
looks expressive of the most sovereign contempt*).

Infamous wretch!—But I deserve it all.

Who told me then to trust this practis'd villain?

Now o'er my head he strides, and on my fall

He builds the bridge of safety!—be it so,

Go, save thyself—my lips are seal'd for ever;—

I will not join e'en thee in my destruction—

I would not own thee, no, not e'en in death;

Life is the faithless villain's only good!

[*To the Officer of the Guard, who steps forward to  
seize him.*

What wilt thou, slave of tyranny, with me?

I laugh to scorn thy threat'nings—I am free.

[*Drawing a dagger.*

OFFIC. He's arm'd;—rush in, and wrest his weapon from him.

[*They rush upon him, he defends himself.*

MORTIMER (*raising his voice*).

And in this latest moment, shall my heart

Expand itself in freedom, and my tongue

Shall break this long constraint. Curse and destruc-  
tion

Light on you all, who have betray'd your faith,

Your God, and your true Sov'reign! Who, alike

To earthly Mary false as to the heav'nly,

Have sold your duties to this bastard Queen!

OFFIC. Hear you these blasphemies? Rush forward—seize  
him!

MORT. . Beloved Queen! I could not set thee free;  
Yet take a lesson from me how to die.



Mary, thou holy one, O! pray for me!  
 And take me to thy heav'nly home on high!  
*[Stabs himself, and falls into the arms of the Guard.]*

SCENE V.

*The Apartment of the Queen.*

ELIZABETH, *with a letter in her hand*, BURLEIGH.

ELIZ. . To lure me thither! trifle with me thus!  
 The traitor! Thus to lead me, as in triumph,  
 Into the presence of his paramour!  
 O, Burleigh! ne'er was woman so deceiv'd.

BUR. . I cannot yet conceive what potent means,  
 What magic he exerted, to surprise  
 My Queen's accusom'd prudence.

ELIZABETH. O, I die  
 For shame! How must he laugh to scorn my weak-  
 ness!

I thought to humble *her*, and was myself  
 The object of her bitter scorn.

BURLEIGH. By this  
 You see how faithfully I counsell'd you.

ELIZ. . O, I am sorely punish'd, that I turn'd  
 My ear from your wise counsels; yet I thought  
 I might confide in him. Who could suspect,  
 Beneath the vows of faithfullest devotion,  
 A deadly snare? In whom can I confide,  
 When he deceives me? He, whom I have made  
 The greatest of the great, and ever set  
 The nearest to my heart, and in this court  
 Allow'd to play the master and the king.

BUR. . Yet in that very moment he betray'd you,  
 Betray'd you to this wily Queen of Scots.

ELIZ. . O, she shall pay me for it with her life!  
 Is the death-warrant ready?

BURLEIGH. 'Tis prepar'd  
 As you commanded.

ELIZABETH. She shall surely die—  
 He shall behold her fall, and fall himself!  
 I've driven him from my heart. No longer love,  
 Revenge alone is there: and high as once  
 He stood, so low and shameful be his fall!

A monument of my severity,  
As once the proud example of my weakness.  
Conduct him to the Tower; let a commission  
Of peers be nam'd to try him. He shall feel  
In its full weight the rigour of the law.

BUR. . But he will seek thy presence; he will clear—

ELIZ. . How can he clear himself? Does not the letter  
Convict him? O, his crimes are manifest!

BUR. . But thou art mild and gracious! His appearance,  
His pow'rful presence—

ELIZABETH. I will never see him;  
No never, never more. Are orders giv'n,  
Not to admit him, should he come?

BURLEIGH. 'Tis done.

PAGE (*entering*).

The Earl of Leicester!

ELIZABETH. The presumptuous man!  
I will not see him. Tell him that I will not.

PAGE. . I am afraid to bring my Lord this message,  
Nor would he credit it.

ELIZABETH. And I have raised him  
So high, that my own servants tremble more  
At him than me!

BURLEIGH (*to the PAGE*). The Queen forbids his presence.  
[*The PAGE retires slowly.*]

ELIZABETH (*after a pause*).

Yet, if it still were possible? If he  
Could clear himself? Might it not be a snare  
Laid by the cunning one, to sever me  
From my best friend—the ever treach'rous harlot!  
She might have writ the letter, but to raise  
Pois'nous suspicion in my heart, to ruin  
The man she hates.

BURLEIGH. Yet, gracious Queen, consider—

# SCENE VI.

LEICESTER (*bursts open the door with violence, and enters with  
an imperious air*).

LEIC. . Fain would I see the shameless man, who dares  
Forbid me the apartments of my Queen!—

ELIZABETH (*avoiding his sight*).

Audacious slave!

LEICESTER. To turn me from the door!

If for a Burleigh she be visible,

She must be so to me!

BURLEIGH. My Lord, you are

Too bold, without permission to intrude—

LEIC. . My Lord, you are too arrogant, to take  
The lead in these apartments. What! Permission!  
I know of none, who stands so high at court  
As to permit my doings, or refuse them.

[*Humbly approaching ELIZABETH.*

'Tis from my Sov'reign's lips alone that I—

ELIZABETH (*without looking at him*).

Out of my sight, deceitful, worthless traitor!

LEIC. . 'Tis not my gracious Queen I hear, but Burleigh,  
My enemy, in these ungentle words.  
'To my imperial mistress I appeal;  
Thou hast lent him thine ear; I ask the like.

ELIZ. . Speak, shameless wretch! Increase your crime—  
deny it—

LEIC. . Dismiss this troublesome intruder first.  
Withdraw, my Lord; it is not of your office  
To play the third man here: between the Queen  
And me there is no need of witnesses.  
Retire—

ELIZABETH (*to BURLEIGH*)

Remain, my Lord; 'tis my command.

LEIC. . What has a third to do 'twixt thee and me?  
I have to clear myself before my Queen,  
My worshipp'd Queen; I will maintain the rights  
Which thou hast given me: these rights are sacred,  
And I insist upon it, that my Lord  
Retire.

ELIZABETH. This haughty tone befits you well.

LEIC. . It well befits me; am not I the man,  
The happy man, to whom thy gracious favour  
Has giv'n the highest station? this exalts me  
Above this Burleigh, and above them all.  
Thy heart imparted me this rank, and what  
Thy favour gave, by Heav'n's I will maintain

At my life's hazard ! Let him go, it needs  
Two moments only to exculpate me.

ELIZ. . Think not, with cunning words, to hide the truth.

LEIC. . That fear from him, so voluble of speech :  
But what I say, is to the heart address'd ;  
And I will justify what I have dar'd  
To do, confiding in thy gen'rous favour,  
Before thy heart alone. I recognise  
No other jurisdiction.

ELIZABETH. Base deceiver !

'Tis this, e'en this, which above all condemns you.

My Lord, produce the letter. [To BURLEIGH.]

BURLEIGH. Here it is.

LEICESTER (*running over the letter without losing his presence of mind*).

'Tis Mary Stuart's hand—

ELIZABETH. Read, and be dumb !

LEICESTER (*having read it quietly*).

Appearance is against me ; yet I hope  
I shall not by appearances be judg'd.

ELIZ. . Can you deny your secret correspondence  
With Mary ?—that *she* sent, and *you* receiv'd  
Her picture, that you gave her hopes of rescue ?

LEIC. . It were an easy matter, if I felt  
That I were guilty of a crime, to challenge  
The testimony of my enemy :  
Yet bold is my good conscience. I confess  
That she hath said the truth.

ELIZABETH. Well then, thou wretch !

BUR. . His own words sentence him—

ELIZABETH. Out of my sight !

Away ! Conduct the traitor to the tow'r !

LEIC. . I am no traitor ; it was wrong, I own,  
To make a secret of this step to thee ;—  
Yet pure was my intention, it was done  
To search into her plots and to confound them

ELIZ. . Vain subterfuge !

BUR. . And do you think, my Lord—

LEIC. . I've play'd a dang'rous game, I know it well,  
And none but Leicester dare be bold enough  
To risk it at this court. The world must know

How I detest this Stuart, and the rank  
Which here I hold, my monarch's confidence,  
With which she honours me, must sure suffice  
To overturn all doubt of my intentions.  
Well may the man thy favour above all  
Distinguishes, pursue a daring course  
To do his duty!

BURLEIGH. If the course was good,  
Wherefore conceal it?

LEICESTER. You are us'd, my Lord,  
To prate before you act—the very chime  
Of your own deeds. This is your manner, Lord.  
But mine, is first to act, and then to speak

BUR. . Yes; now you speak, because you must.

LEICESTER (*measuring him proudly and disdainfully with  
his eyes*).

And *you*

Boast of a wonderful, a mighty action,  
That *you* have sav'd the Queen, have snatch'd away  
The mask from treach'ry :—all is known to *you* ;  
You think, forsooth, that nothing can escape  
Your penetrating eyes. Poor, idle boaster!  
In spite of all your cunning, Mary Stuart  
Was free to day, had I not hinder'd it.

BUR. . How? *you*!

LEICESTER. Yes *I*, my Lord: the Queen confided  
In Mortimer; she open'd to the youth  
Her inmost soul! Yes, she went farther still;  
She gave him too a secret bloody charge,  
Which Paulet had before refus'd with horror.  
Say, is it so, or not?

[*The QUEEN and BURLEIGH look at one another  
with astonishment.*

BURLEIGH. Whence know you this?

LEIC. . Nay, is it not a fact? Now answer me!  
And where, my Lord, where were your thousand eyes,  
Not to discover Mortimer was false?  
That he, the Guise's tool, and Mary's creature,  
A raging Papist, daring fanatic,  
Was come to free the Stuart and to murder  
The Queen of England!

ELIZABETH (*with the utmost astonishment*).

How! This Mortimer?

LEIC. . 'Twas he through whom our correspondence pass'd;  
This plot it was which introduc'd me to him.  
This very day she was to have been torn  
From her confinement; he, this very moment,  
Disclos'd his plan to me: I took him pris'ner,  
And gave him to the guard, when in despair  
'To see his work o'erturn'd, himself unmask'd,  
He slew himself!

ELIZABETH. O, I indeed have been  
Deceiv'd beyond example, Mortimer!

BUR. . . This happen'd then but now! Since last we parted?

LEIC. . For my own sake, I must lament the deed—  
That he was thus cut off. His testimony,  
Were he alive, had fully clear'd my fame,  
And freed me from suspicion:—'twas for this  
That I surrender'd him to open justice.  
I thought to choose the most impartial course  
To verify and fix my innocence  
Before the world.

BURLEIGH. He kill'd himself, you say!  
Is't so? Or did you kill him?

LEICESTER. Vile suspicion!  
Hear but the guard who seiz'd him.

[*He goes to the door, and calls.*

Ho! Who waits?

[*Enter the Officer of the guard.*

Sir, tell the Queen how Mortimer expir'd.

OFFIC. . I was on duty in the palace porch,  
When suddenly my Lord threw wide the door.  
And order'd me to take the knight in charge,  
Denouncing him a traitor: upon this  
He grew enrag'd, and with most bitter curses  
Against our sov'reign, and our holy faith,  
He drew a dagger, and before the guards  
Could hinder his intention, plung'd the steel  
Into his heart, and fell a lifeless corpse.

LEIC. . 'Tis well; you may withdraw. Her Majesty  
Has heard enough.

[*The Officer withdraws.*

ELIZABETH.

O! what a deep abyss  
Of monstrous deeds!

LEICESTER.

Who was it then, my Queen,  
Who sav'd you? Was it Burleigh? Did he know  
The dangers which surrounded you? Did he  
Avert them from your head? Your faithful Leicester  
Was your good angel.

BURLEIGH.

This same Mortimer  
Died most conveniently for *you*, my Lord.

ELIZ. .

What I should say I know not. I believe you,  
And I believe you not:—I think you guilty,  
And yet I think you not. A curse on her  
Who caus'd me all this anguish!

LEICESTER.

She must die—  
I now myself consent unto her death.  
I formerly advis'd you to suspend  
The sentence, till some arm should rise anew  
On her behalf; the case has happen'd now,  
And I demand her instant execution.

BUR. . . You give this counsel? *You?*

LEICESTER.

Howe'er it wound  
My feelings to be forc'd to this extreme,  
Yet now I see most clearly, now I feel  
That the Queen's welfare asks this bloody victim.  
'Tis my proposal, therefore, that the writ  
Be drawn at once, to fix the execution.

BURLEIGH (*to the QUEEN*).

Since then his lordship shows such earnest zeal,  
Such loyalty, 'twere well, were he appointed  
To see the execution of the sentence.

LEIC. . Who? *I?*

BURLEIGH.

Yes, *you*; you surely ne'er could find  
A better means to shake off the suspicion  
Which rests upon you still, than to command  
Her, whom 'tis said you love, to be beheaded.

ELIZABETH (*looking stedfastly at LEICESTER*).

My Lord advises well. So be it then!

LEIC. .

It were but fit that my exalted rank  
Should free me from so mournful a commission,  
Which would indeed, in ev'ry sense, become  
A Burleigh better than the Earl of Leicester.  
The man who stands so near the royal person

Should have no knowledgo of such fatal scenes :  
 But yet, to prove my zeal, to satisfy  
 My Queen, I wave my charge's privilege,  
 And take upon myself this hateful duty.

ELIZ. . Lord Burleigh shall partake this duty with you.

[To BURLEIGH.

So be the warrant instantly prepar'd.

[BURLEIGH *withdraws* ; a tumult heard without.

### SCENE VII.

*The QUEEN, the EARL OF KENT.*

ELIZ. . How now, my Lord of Kent ? What uproar 's this,  
 I hear without ?

KENT. . My Queen, it is thy people,  
 Who, round the palace rang'd, impatiently  
 Demand to see their sov'reign.

ELIZABETH. What 's their wish ?

KENT. . A panic terror has already spread  
 Through London, that thy life has been attempted ;  
 That murderers commission'd from the Pope  
 Beset thee ; that the Catholics have sworn  
 To rescue from her prison Mary Stuart,  
 And to proclaim her Queen. Thy loyal people  
 Believe it, and are mad—her head alone  
 Can quiet them—this day must be her last.

ELIZ. . How ! Will they force me then ?

KENT. . They are resolv'd—

### SCENE VIII.

*Enter BURLEIGH and DAVISON, with a paper*

ELIZ. . Well, Davison ?

DAV. . (*approaches earnestly*)

Your orders are obey'd,

My Queen—

ELIZABETH. What orders, Sir ?

[*As she is about to take the paper, she shudders,  
 and starts back.*

O God !—

BURLEIGH.

Obey

Thy people's voice ; it is the voice of God.

ELIZABETH (*irresolute, as if in contest with herself*).

O my good Lord, who will assure me now



That what I hear is my whole people's voice,  
 The voice of all the world! Ah! much I fear,  
 That, if I now should listen to the wish  
 Of the wild multitude, a different voice  
 Might soon be heard;—and that the very men,  
 Who now by force oblige me to this step,  
 May, when 'tis taken, heavily condemn me!

## SCENE IX.

*Enter the EARL OF SHREWSBURY (who enters with great emotion).*

Hold fast, my Queen, they wish to hurry thee;

*[Seeing DAVISON with the paper.*

Be firm—Or is it then decided?—is it  
 Indeed decided? I behold a paper  
 Of ominous appearance in his hand;  
 Let it not at this moment meet thy eyes,  
 My Queen!—

ELIZ. . Good Shrewsbury! I am constrain'd—

SHREW. Who can constrain thee? Thou art Queen of England,  
 Here must thy Majesty assert its rights:  
 Command those savage voices to be silent,  
 Who take upon themselves to put constraint  
 Upon thy royal will, to rule thy judgment.  
 Fear only, blind conjecture, moves thy people;  
 Thou art thyself beside thyself; thy wrath  
 Is grievously provok'd: thou art but mortal,  
 And canst not thus ascend the judgment seat.

BUR. . Judgment has long been past. It is not now  
 The time to speak, but execute the sentence.

KENT *(who, on SHREWSBURY'S entry, had retired, comes back).*  
 'The tumult gains apaco: there are no means  
 To moderate the people

ELIZABETH *(to SHREWSBURY).* See, my Lord,  
 How they press on.

SHREWSBURY. I only ask a respite;  
 A single word trac'd by thy hand decides  
 The peace, the happiness of all thy life!  
 Thou hast for years consider'd, let not then  
 A moment rul'd by passion hurry thee—  
 But a short respite—recollect thyself!  
 Wait for a moment of tranquillity.

BURLEIGH (*violently*).

Wait for it—pause—delay—till flames of fire  
Consume the realm ; until the fifth attempt  
Of murder be successful ! God, indeed,  
Hath thrice deliver'd thee ; thy late escape  
Was marvellous, and to expect again  
A miracle, would be to tempt thy God !

SHREW. That God, whose potent hand hath thrice preserv'd  
thee,

Who lent my aged feeble arm the strength  
To overcome the madman :—he deserves  
Thy confidence. I will not raise the voice  
Of justice now, for now is not the time ;  
Thou canst not hear it in this storm of passion.  
Yet listen but to this ! Thou tremblest now  
Before this living Mary—tremble rather  
Before the murder'd, the beheaded Mary.  
She will arise, and quit her grave, will range  
A fiend of discord, an avenging ghost  
Around thy realm, and turn thy people's hearts  
From their allegiance. For as yet the Britons  
Hate her, because they fear her ; but most surely  
Will they avenge her, when she is no more.  
They will no more behold the enemy  
Of their belief, they will but see in her  
The much-lamented issue of their kings  
A sacrifice to jealousy and hate.

Then quickly shalt thou see the sudden change  
When thou hast done the bloody deed ; then go  
Through London, seek thy people, which till now  
Around thee swarm'd delighted ; thou shalt see  
Another England, and another people ;  
For then no more the godlike dignity  
Of justice, which subdued thy subjects' hearts,  
Will beam around thee. Fear, the dread ally  
Of tyranny, will shudd'ring march before thee,  
And make a wilderness in ev'ry street—  
'The last, extremest crime thou hast committed.  
What head is safe, if the anointed fall ?

ELIZ. . Ah ! Shrewsbury, you sav'd my life, you turn'd  
The murd'rous steel aside ; why let you not

The dagger take its course? then all these broils  
Would have been ended; then, releas'd from doubt,  
And free from blame, I should be now at rest  
In my still peaceful grave. In very sooth,  
I'm weary of my life, and of my crown.  
If Heav'n decree that one of us two Queens  
Must perish, to secure the other's life—  
And sure it must be so—why should not I  
Be she who yields? My people must decide;  
I give them back the Sovereignty they gave.  
God is my witness, that I have not liv'd  
For my own sake, but for my people's welfare.  
If they expect from this false, fawning Stuart,  
The younger sovereign, more happy days,  
I will descend with pleasure from the throne,  
Again repair to Woodstock's quiet bowers,  
Where once I spent my unambitious youth;  
Where far remov'd from all the vanities  
Of earthly power, I found within myself  
True Majesty. I am not made to rule—  
A ruler should be made of sterner stuff:  
My heart is soft and tender. I have govern'd  
These many years, this kingdom happily,  
But then I only needed to make happy:  
Now, comes my first important regal duty,  
And now I feel how weak a thing I am.

BUR. . Now by mine honour, when I hear my Queen,  
My royal liege, speak such unroyal words,  
I should betray my office, should betray  
My country, were I longer to be silent.  
You say you love your people 'bove yourself,  
Now prove it. Choose not peace for your own heart,  
And leave your kingdom to the storms of discord.  
Think on the church. Shall, with this Papist Queen,  
The ancient superstition be renew'd?  
The monk resume his sway, the Roman legate  
In pomp march hither; lock our churches up,  
Dethrone our monarchs? I demand of you  
The souls of all your subjects—as you now  
Shall act, they all are sav'd, or all are lost!  
Here is no time for mercy;—to promote  
Your people's welfare is your highest duty.

If Shrewsbury has sav'd your life, then I  
Will save both you, and England—that is more!

ELIZ. . I would be left alone. No consolation,  
No counsel, can be drawn from human aid  
In this conjuncture:—I will lay my doubts  
Before the Judge of all:—I am resolv'd  
To act as He shall teach. Withdraw, my Lords.

[To DAVISON, who lays the paper on the table.

You, Sir, remain in waiting—close at hand.

[The Lords withdraw; SHREWSBURY alone stands  
for a few moments before the QUEEN, regards  
her significantly, then withdraws slowly, and  
with an expression of the deepest anguish.

# SCENE X.

ELIZABETH alone.

O! servitude of popularity!  
Disgraceful slavery! How weary am I  
Of flattering this idol, which my soul  
Despises in its inmost depth! O! when  
Shall I once more be free upon this throne?  
I must respect the people's voice, and strive  
To win the favour of the multitude,  
And please the fancies of a mob, whom nought  
But jugglers' tricks delight. O call not him  
A king, who needs must please the world: 'tis he  
Alone, who in his actions does not heed  
The fickle approbation of mankind.  
Have I then practis'd justice, all my life  
Shunn'd each despotic deed; have I done this,  
Only to bind my hands against this first,  
This necessary act of violence?  
My own example now condemns myself!  
Had I but been a tyrant, like my sister,  
My predecessor, I could fearless then  
Have shed this royal blood:—but am I now  
Just by my own free choice? No—I was forc'd  
By stern necessity to use this virtue;  
Necessity, which binds e'en monarchs' wills.  
Surrounded by my foes, my people's love  
Alone supports me on my envied throne.  
All Europe's pow'rs confederate to destroy me;

The Pope's inveterate decree declares me  
 Accurst and excommunicated. France  
 Betrays me with a kiss, and Spain prepares  
 At sea a fierce exterminating war ;  
 Thus stand I, in contention with the world,  
 A poor defenceless woman : I must seek  
 To veil the spot in my imperial birth,  
 By which my father cast disgrace upon me :  
 In vain with princely virtues would I hide it ;  
 The envious hatred of my enemies  
 Uncovers it, and places Mary Stuart  
 A threat'ning fiend before me evermore !  
*[Walking up and down, with quick and agitated steps.*  
 O no ! this fear must end. Her head must fall !'  
 I *will* have peace. She is the very fury  
 Of my existence ; a tormenting demon,  
 Which destiny has fasten'd on my soul.  
 Wherever I had planted me a comfort,  
 A flatt'ring hope, my way was ever cross'd  
 By this infernal viper ! She has torn  
 My fav'rite, and my destined bridegroom from me.  
 The hated name of ev'ry ill I feel  
 Is Mary Stuart—were but she no more  
 On earth, I should be free as mountain air.

*{Standing still.*

With what disdain did she look down on me.  
 As if her eye should blast me like the lightning !  
 Poor feeble wretch ! I bear far other arms,  
 Their touch is mortal, and thou art no more.

*[Advancing to the table hastily, and taking the pen.*

I am a bastard am I ? Hapless wretch,  
 I am but so the while thou liv'st and breath'st.

*[Thy death will make my birth legitimate.]*

The moment I destroy thee, is the doubt  
 Destroy'd, which hangs o'er my imperial right.  
 As soon as England has no other choice,  
 My mother's honour and my birthright triumphs !

*{She signs with resolution; lets her pen then fall, and steps back with an expression of terror.—After a pause she rings.*

## SCENE XI.

ELIZABETH, DAVISON.

ELIZ. . Where are their Lordships?

DAVISON. They are gone to quell  
 The tumult of the people. The alarm  
 Was instantly appeas'd, when they beheld  
 The Earl of Shrewsbury. That's he! exclaim'd  
 A hundred voices—that's the man—he sav'd  
 The Queen; hear *him*—the bravest man in England!  
 And now began the gallant Talbot, blam'd  
 In gentle words the people's violence,  
 And used such strong, persuasive eloquence,  
 That all were pacified, and silently  
 They slunk away.

ELIZABETH. The fickle multitude!  
 Which turns with ev'ry wind. Unhappy he  
 Who leans upon this reed! 'Tis well, Sir William;  
 You may retire again—  
 [*As he is going towards the door.*]

And, Sir, this paper,

Receive it back; I place it in your hands.

DAVISON (*casts a look upon the paper, and starts back*).

My gracious Queen—thy name!—'tis then decided.

ELIZ. . I had but to subscribe it—I have done so—  
 A paper sure cannot decide—a name  
 Kills not—

DAVISON. Thy name, my Queen, beneath this paper,  
 Is most decisive—kills—'tis like the lightning,  
 Which blasteth as it flies! This fatal scroll  
 Commands the Sheriff and Commissioners  
 To take departure straight for Fotheringay,  
 And to the Queen of Scots announce her death,  
 Which must at dawn be put in execution.  
 There is no respite, no discretion, here—  
 As soon as I have parted with this writ,  
 Her race is run—

ELIZABETH. . Yes, Sir, the Lord has plac'd  
 This weighty business in your feeble hands;  
 Seek him in pray'r, to light you with his wisdom;  
 I go—and leave you, Sir, to do your duty. [*Going.*]

DAV. . . No ; leave me not, my Queen, till I have heard  
Your will. The only wisdom that I need  
Is, word for word, to follow your commands.  
Say, have you plac'd this warrant in my hands,  
To see that it be speedily enforced ?

ELIZ. . That you must do, as your own prudence dictates.

DAVISON (*interrupting her quickly, and alarmed*).

Not mine—O God forbid ! Obedience is  
My only prudence here. No point must now  
Be left to be decided by your servant.  
A small mistake would here be regicide,  
A monstrous crime, from which my soul recoils !  
Permit me, in this weighty act, to be  
Your passive instrument, without a will ;—  
Tell me in plain undoubted terms your pleasure,  
What with the bloody mandate I should do.

ELIZ. . Its name declares its meaning.

DAVISON. Do you, then,

My Liege, command its instant execution ?

ELIZ. . I said not that ; I tremble but to think it.

DAV. . . Shall I retain it, then, 'till further orders ?

ELIZ. . At your own risk ; you answer the event.

DAV. . . I !—gracious Heavens !—O speak, my Queen, your  
pleasure !

ELIZ. . My pleasure is, that this unhappy bus'ness  
Be no more mention'd to me ; that at last  
I may be freed from it, and that for ever.

DAV. . . It costs you but a word—determine then ;  
What shall I do with this mysterious scroll ?

ELIZ. . I *have* declar'd it, plague me, Sir, no longer.

DAV. . . You *have* declar'd it ? say you ? O, my Queen,  
You have said nothing. Please my gracious mistress  
But to remember—

ELIZABETH (*stamps on the ground*).

Insupportable !

DAV. . . O, be indulgent to me ! I have enter'd  
Unwittingly, not many months ago,  
Upon this office ; I know not the language  
Of courts and kings. I ever have been rear'd  
In simple, open wise, a plain blunt man.  
Be patient with me ; nor deny your servant

A light to lead him clearly to his duty.

[*He approaches her in a supplicating posture, she turns her back on him; he stands in despair; then speaks with a tone of resolution.*

Take, take again this paper—take it back!

Within my hands, it is a glowing fire.

Select not me, my Queen; select not me

To serve you, in this terrible conjuncture.

ELIZ. . Go, Sir;—fulfil the duty of your office! [Exit.

SCENE XII.

DAVISON, *then* BURLEIGH.

DAV. . . She goes! She leaves me doubting, and perplex'd  
With this dread paper! How to act I know not;  
Should I retain it, should I forward it?

[*To BURLEIGH, who enters.*

Oh! I am glad that you are come, my Lord,  
'Tis you who have preferr'd me to this charge;

Now free me from it, for I undertook it,  
Unknowing how responsible it made me.

Let me then seek again th' obscurity

In which you found me; this is not my place.

BUR. . . How now? Take courage, Sir! Where is the warrant?  
The Queen was with you.

DAVISON. She has quitted me

In bitter anger. O advise me, help me,

Save me from this fell agony of doubt!

My Lord, here is the warrant: it is sign'd!

BUR. . . Indeed? O give it, give it me!

DAVISON. I may not.

BUR. . . How!

DAV. . . She has not yet explain'd her final will.

BUR. . . Explain'd! She has subscrib'd it;—give it me.

DAV. . . I am to execute it, and I am not.

Great Heavens! I know not what I am to do!

BURLEIGH (*urging more violently*).

It must be now, this moment, executed—

The warrant, Sir. You're lost if you delay.

DAV. . . So am I also, if I act too rashly.

BUR. . . What strange infatuation. Give it me.

[*Snatches the paper from him, and exit with it.*



DAV. . . What would you? Hold! You will be my destruction!

## ACT V.

## SCENE I.

*The Scene the same as in the First Act.*

HANNAH KENNEDY in deep mourning, her eyes still red from weeping in great but quiet anguish, is employed in sealing letters and parcels. Her sorrow often interrupts her occupation, and she is seen at such intervals to pray in silence. PAULIT and DRURY, also in mourning, enter, followed by many servants, who bear golden and silver vessels, mirrors, paintings, and other valuables, and fill the back part of the stage with them: PAULIT delivers to the Nurse a box of jewels and a paper, and seems to inform her by signs, that it contains the inventory of the effects the QUEEN had brought with her. At the sight of these riches, the anguish of the Nurse is renewed; she sinks into a deep, gloomy melancholy, during which DRURY, PAULIT, and the Servants, silently retire.

MELVIL enters.

KENNEDY (screams aloud, as soon as she observes him).

Melvil! Is't you? Behold I you again?

MIL. . Yes, faithful Kennedy, we meet once more.

KEN. . After this long, long, painful separation!

MEL. . A most unhappy, bitter meeting, this!

KEN. . You come—

MELVIL. To take an everlasting leave

Of my dear Queen—to bid a last farewell!

KEN. . And now at length, now on the fatal morn  
Which brings her death, they grant our royal Lady  
The presence of her friends. O, worthy Sir,  
I will not question you, how you have far'd,  
Nor tell you all the sufferings we've endured,  
Since you were torn away from us:—alas!  
There will be time enough for that hereafter.  
O, Melvil, Melvil, why was it our fate  
To see the dawn of this unhappy day!

MEL. . Let us not melt each other with our grief.  
Throughout my whole remaining life, as long  
As ever it may be, I'll sit and weep;

A smile shall never more light up these cheeks,  
 Ne'er will I lay this sable garb aside,  
 But lead henceforth a life of endless mourning.  
 Yet on this last sad day, I will be firm ;  
 Pledge me your word to moderate your grief ;  
 And when the rest, of comfort all bereft,  
 Abandon'd to despair, wail round her, we  
 Will lead her with heroic resolution,  
 And be her staff upon the road to death !

KEN. . Melvil ! You are deceiv'd, if you suppose  
 The Queen has need of our support to meet  
 Her death with firmness. *She it is, my friend,*  
 Who will exhibit the undaunted heart.

O ! trust me, Mary Stuart will expire  
 As best becomes a Heroine and Queen !

MEL. . Receiv'd she firmly, then, the sad decree  
 Of death ?—'tis said, that she was not prepar'd.

KEN. . She was not ; yet they were far other terrors  
 Which made our Lady shudder : 'twas not death,  
 But her deliverer, which made her tremble.  
 Freedom was promis'd us ; this very night  
 Had Mortimer engag'd to bear us hence :  
 And thus the Queen, perplex'd 'twixt hope and fear,  
 And doubting still if she should trust her honour  
 And royal person to th' advent'rous youth,  
 Sat waiting for the morning. On a sudden  
 We hear a boist'rous tumult in the castle ;  
 Our ears are startled by repeated blows  
 Of many hammers, and we think we hear  
 The approach of our deliv'ers :—hope salutes us,  
 / And suddenly and unresisted, wakes  
 / The sweet desire of life And now at once  
 The portals are thrown open—it is Paulet,  
 Who comes to tell us—that—the carpenters  
 Erect beneath our feet the murd'rous scaffold !

*[She turns aside, overpowered by excessive anguish.]*

MEL. . O God in Heav'n ! O tell me then, how bore  
 The Queen this terrible vicissitude ?

KENNEDY *(after a pause, in which she has somewhat collected herself)*.

Not by degrees can we relinquish life ;

Quick, sudden, in the twinkling of an eye  
 The separation must be made, the change  
 From temporal, to eternal life;—and God  
 Imparted to our mistress at this moment  
 His grace, to cast away each earthly hope,  
 And firm and full of faith to mount the skies.  
 No sign of pallid fear dishonour'd her;  
 No word of mourning, 'till she heard the tidings  
 Of Leicester's shameful treach'ry, the sad fate  
 Of the deserving youth, who sacrificed  
 Himself for her: the deep, the bitter anguish  
 Of that old knight, who lost, through her, his last,  
 His only hope; till then she shed no tear,—  
 'Twas then her tears began to flow, 'twas not  
 Her own, but others' woe which wrung them from her.  
 MEL. Where is she now? Can you not lead me to her?  
 KEN. She spent the last remainder of the night  
 In pray'r, and from her dearest friends she took  
 Her last farewell in writing:—then she wrote  
 Her will\* with her own hand. She now enjoys  
 A moment of repose, the latest slumber  
 Refreshes her weak spirits.

MELVIL. Who attends her?

KEN. . None but her women and physician Burgoyne:  
 You seem to look around you with surprise;  
 Your eyes appear to ask me what should mean  
 This show of splendour in the house of death.  
 O, Sir, while yet we lived we suffer'd want;  
 But at our death plenty returns to us.

## SCENE II

*Enter MARGARET CURL.*

KEN. . How, Madam, fares the Queen? Is she awake?

CURL (*drying her tears*).

She is already dressed—she asks for you.

KEN. . I go;—

[*To MELVIL, who seems to wish to accompany her.*

But follow not, until the Queen

Has been prepar'd to see you.

[*Exit.*

CURL.

Melvil, sure,

The ancient steward?

\* The document is now in the British Museum.

MELVIL.

Yes, the same.

CURL.

O, Sir,

This is a house which needs no steward now!  
 Melvil, you come from London; can you give  
 No tidings of my husband?

MELVIL.

It is said

He will be set at liberty, as soon—

CURL. . As soon as our dear Queen shall be no more.

O, the unworthy, the disgraceful traitor!

He is our Lady's murderer—'tis said

It was his testimony which condemn'd her.

MEL.

'Tis true.

CURL.

O, curse upon him!—be his soul  
 Condemn'd for ever!—he has borne false witness—

MEL.

Think, Madam, what you say.

CURL.

I will maintain it  
 With ev'ry sacred oath, before the court,  
 I will repeat it in his very face;  
 The world shall hear of nothing else. I say  
 That she dies innocent!

MELVIL.

God grant it true!

## SCENE III.

*Enter HANNAH KENNEDY.*

KENNEDY (to CURL).

Go, Madam, and require a cup of wine—

'Tis for our Lady.

MELVIL.

Is the Queen then sick?

KEN. . She thinks that she is strong; she is deceiv'd

By her heroic courage; she believes

She has no need of nourishment; yet still

A hard and painful task's allotted her.

Her enemies shall not enjoy the triumph;

They shall not say that fear hath blanch'd her cheeks,

When her fatigues have conquer'd human weakness.

MEL. . May I approach her?

KENNEDY

She will come herself.

## SCENE IV.

*Enter BURGON; two women of the chamber follow him, weeping,  
 and in deep mourning.*

BURG. . O, Melvil!

MELVIL. O, Burgoyne! [*They embrace silently.*  
 FIRST WOMAN (*to the NURSE*). She chose to be  
 Alone :—she wishes, at this awful moment,  
 For the last time, to commune with her God.

## SCENE V.

*Enter MARGARET CURL, bearing a golden cup of wine; she places it hastily upon the table, and leans, pale and trembling, against a chair.*

MEL. . How, Madam! What has frighten'd you?

KENNEDY.

O God!

BURG. . Speak, Madam.

CURL. What, alas! have I beheld!

MEL. . Come to yourself, and say what you have seen!

CURL. . As I went down the staircase which conducts  
 'To the great hall below, a door stood open;  
 I look'd into the chamber, and I saw—  
 O Heav'n!

MELVIL. What saw you?

CURL. All the walls were hung  
 With black; a spacious scaffold too o'erspread  
 With sable cloth, was rais'd above the floor,  
 And in the middle of the scaffold stood  
 A dreadful sable block! upon it lay  
 A naked, polish'd axe :—the hall was full  
 Of cruel people, crowding round the scaffold;  
 Who, with a horrid thirst for human blood,  
 Seem'd waiting for the victim!

THE WOMEN. Gracious Heav'n  
 Protect our Queen!

MELVIL. Be calm; the Queen approaches.

## SCENE VI.

*Enter MARY in white and sumptuously arrayed, as for a festival: she wears hanging from her neck, on a row of small beads an Agnus Dei; a rosary hangs from her girdle; she bears a crucifix in her hand, and a diadem of precious stones binds her hair; her large black veil is thrown back. On her entrance, all present fall back on both sides with the most violent expressions of aghast. MELVIL falls involuntarily upon his knees.*

MARY (*with quiet majesty, looking round the whole circle*).

Why these complaints? Why weep ye? Ye should rather

Rejoice with me, that now at length the end  
Of my long wo approaches; that my shackles  
Fall off, my prison opens, and my soul  
Delighted mounts on seraph's wings, and seeks  
The land of everlasting liberty.

When I was offer'd up to the oppression  
Of my proud enemy, was forc'd to suffer  
Ignoble taunts, and insults most unfitting  
A free and sov'reign Queen, then was the time  
To weep for me; but, as an earnest friend,  
Beneficent and healing Death approaches.  
All the indignities which I have suffer'd  
On earth, are cover'd by his sable wings.  
The most degraded criminal 's ennobled  
By his last suff'rings, by his final exit;  
I feel again the crown upon my brows.  
And dignity possess my swelling soul!

[*Advancing a few steps.*]

How! Melvil here! My worthy Sir, not so;  
Arise; you rather come in time to see  
The triumph of your mistress, than her death  
One comfort, which I never had expected,  
Is granted me, that, after death, my name  
Will not be quite abandon'd to my foes;  
One friend at least, one partner of my faith,  
Will be my witness in the hour of death.  
Say, honest Melvil, how you far'd the while  
In this inhospitable, hostile land?

For since the time they tore you from my side,  
My fears for you have oft depress'd my soul.

MEL. No other evil gall'd me, but my grief

For thee, and that I wanted pow'r to serve thee.

MARY. How fares my chamberlain, old Didier?

But sure the faithful servant long has slept  
The sleep of death, for he was full of years.

MEL. God hath not granted him as yet this grace;

He lives to see the grave o'erwhelm thy youth.

MARY. O! Could I but have felt before my death,

The happiness of pressing one descendant  
 Of the dear blood of Stuart to my bosom.  
 But I must suffer in a foreign land,  
 None but my servants to bewail my fate!  
 Sir ; to your loyal bosom I commit  
 My latest wishes. Bear then, Sir, my blessing  
 To the most Christian king, my royal brother,  
 And the whole royal family of France.  
 I bless the cardinal, my honour'd uncle,  
 And also Henry Guise, my noble cousin.  
 I bless the holy Father, the vicegerent  
 Of Christ on earth, who will, I trust, bless me.  
 I bless the King of Spain, who nobly offer'd  
 Himself as my deliv'rer, my avenger.  
 They are remember'd in my will : I hope  
 That they will not despise, how poor soo'er  
 They be, the presents of a heart which loves them.

[*Turning to her servants.*]

I have bequeath'd you to my royal brother  
 Of France ; he will protect you, he will give you  
 Another country, and a better home ;  
 And if my last desire have any weight,  
 Stay not in England ; let no haughty Briton  
 Glut his proud heart with your calamities,  
 Nor see those in the dust, who once were mine.  
 Swear by this image of our suffering Lord,  
 To leave this fatal land, when I'm no more.

MELVIL (*touching the crucifix*).

I swear obedience, in the name of all.

MARY. . What I, though poor and plunder'd, still possess,  
 Of which I am allow'd to make disposal,  
 Shall be amongst you shar'd ; for I have hope  
 In this at least, my will may be fulfill'd.  
 And what I wear upon the way to death,  
 Is yours—nor envy me on this occasion,  
 The pomp of earth upon the road to heav'n.

[*To the ladies of her chamber.*]

To you, my Alice, Gertrude, Rosamund,  
 I leave my pearls, my garments : you are young,  
 And ornament may still delight your hearts.  
 You, Margaret, possess the nearest claims,  
 To you I should be gen'rous : for I leave you

The most unhappy woman of them all.  
 That I have not aveng'd your husband's fault  
 On you, I hope my legacy will prove.  
 The worth of gold, my Hannah, charms not thee;  
 Nor the magnificence of precious stones:  
 My memory, I know will be to thee  
 The dearest jewel; take this handkerchief,  
 I work'd it for thee, in the hours of sorrow,  
 With my own hands, and my hot scalding tears  
 Are woven in the texture:—you will bind  
 My eyes with this, when it is time: this last  
 Sad service I would wish but from my Hannah.

KEN. . O Melvil! I cannot support it.

MARY.

Come,

Come all, and now receive my last farewell

*[She stretches forth her hands; the WOMEN violently weeping, fall successively at her feet and kiss her outstretched hand.]*

Marg'ret farewell—my Alice, fare thee well;  
 Thanks Burgoyne, for thy honest faithful service—  
 Thy lips are hot, my Gertrude:—I have been  
 Much hated, yet have been as much belov'd.  
 May a deserving husband bless my Gertrude,  
 For this warm glowing heart is form'd for love.  
 Bertha, thy choice is better, thou hadst rather  
 Become the chaste and pious bride of heav'n;—  
 O! haste thee to fulfil thy vows;—the goods  
 Of earth are all deceitful;—thou may'st learn  
 This lesson from thy Queen. No more; farewell,  
 Farewell, farewell, my friends, farewell for ever.

*[She turns suddenly from them; all but MELVIL retire at different sides.]*

#### SCENE VII.

MARY, MELVIL.

MARY *(after the others are all gone)*.

I have arrang'd all temporal concerns,  
 And hope to leave the world in debt to none;  
 Melvil, one thought alone there is, which binds  
 My troubled soul, nor suffers it to fly  
 Delighted, and at liberty, to heav'n



MEL. . Disclose it to me ; ease your bosom, trust  
Your doubts, your sorrows to your faithful friend.

MARY. . I see eternity's abyss before me ;—  
Soon must I stand before the highest judge  
And have not yet appeas'd the Holy One.  
A priest of my religion is denied me.  
And I disdain to take the sacrament,  
The holy, heav'nly nourishment, from priests  
Of a false faith ; I die in the belief  
Of my own church, for that alone can save.

MEL. . Compose your heart ; the fervent pious wish  
Is priz'd in heaven as high as the performance.  
The might of tyrants can but bind the hands,  
'The heart's devotion rises free to God,  
'The word is dead—'tis faith which brings to life

MARY. . 'The heart is not sufficient of itself ;  
Our faith must have some earthly pledge to ground  
Its claims to the high bliss of heav'n. For this  
Our God became incarnate, and inclos'd  
Mysteriously his unseen heav'nly grace  
Within the outward figure of a body.  
The church it is, the holy one, the high one,  
Which rears for us the ladder up to heav'n :—  
'Tis call'd the Catholic—apostolic church,—  
For 'tis but gen'ral faith can strengthen faith ;  
Where thousands worship and adore, the beat  
Breaks out in flame, and borne on eagle wings,  
The soul mounts upwards to the heav'n of heav'ns.  
Ah ! happy they, who for the glad communion  
Of pious pray'r, meet in the house of God !  
The altar is adorn'd, the tapers blaze,  
The bell invites, the incense soars on high,  
The bishop stands enrob'd, he takes the cup,  
And blessing it declares the solemn mystery,  
The transformation of the elements ;  
And the believing people fall delighted  
To worship and adore the present Godhead.  
Alas ! I only am debarr'd from this ;  
The heav'nly benediction pierces not  
My prison walls : its comfort is denied me

MEL. . Yes ! it can pierce them—put thy trust in Him  
Who is almighty—in the hand of faith,

The wither'd staff can send forth verdant branches ;  
 And he who from the rock call'd living water,  
 He can prepare an altar in this prison,  
 Can change—

*[Seizing the cup, which stands upon the table.*

The earthly contents of this cup  
 Into a substance of celestial grace.

MARY. . Melvil ! O yes, I understand you, Melvil !  
 Here is no priest, no church, no sacrament ;  
 But the Redeemer says, " When two or three  
 Are in my name assembled, I am with them."  
 What consecrates the priest ? Say, what ordains him  
 To be the Lord's interpreter ?—a heart  
 Devoid of guile, and a reproachless conduct.  
 Well, then, though unordain'd, be you my priest ;  
 To you will I confide my last confession,  
 And take my absolution from your lips.

MEL. . If then thy heart be with such zeal inflam'd,  
 I tell thee, that for thine especial comfort,  
 The Lord may work a miracle. Thou say'st  
 Here is no priest, no church, no sacrament—  
 Thou err'st—here *is* a priest—here *is* a God ;  
 A god descends to thee in real presence.

*[At these words he uncovers his head, and shows  
 a host in a golden vessel.*

I am a priest—to hear thy last confession,  
 And to announce to thee the peace of God  
 Upon thy way to death. I have receiv'd  
 Upon my head the seven consecrations.  
 I bring thee, from his Holiness, this host,  
 Which, for thy use, himself has deign'd to bless.

MARY. . Is then a heav'nly happiness prepar'd  
 To cheer me on the very verge of death ?  
 As an immortal one on golden clouds  
 Descends, as once the angel from on high,  
 Deliver'd the Apostle from his fetters :—  
 He scorns all bars, he scorns the soldier's sword,  
 He steps undaunted through the bolted portals,  
 And fills the dungeon with his native glory ;  
 Thus here the messenger of Heav'n appears,  
 When ev'ry earthly champion had deceiv'd me.  
 And you, my servant once, are now the servant .

Of the Most High, and his immortal Word!  
As before *me* your knees were wont to bend,  
Before you humbled, now I kiss the dust.

*[She sinks before him on her knees]*

MELVIL (*making over her the sign of the cross*).

Hear, Mary Queen of Scotland:—in the name  
Of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
Hast thou examin'd carefully thy heart,  
Swear'st thou, art thou prepar'd in thy confession  
To speak the truth before the God of truth?

MARY. . Before my God and thee, my heart lies open.

MEL. . What calls thee to the presence of the Highest?

MARY. . I humbly do acknowledge to have err'd  
Most grievously. I tremble to approach,  
Sullied with sin, the God of purity.

MEL. . Declare the sin which weighs so heavily  
Upon thy conscience, since thy last confession.

MARY. . My heart was fill'd with thoughts of envious hate,  
And vengeance took possession of my bosom.  
I hope forgiveness of my sins from God,  
Yet could I not forgive my enemy.

MEL. . Repent'st thou of the sin? Art thou, in sooth,  
Resolv'd to leave this world at peace with all?

MARY. . As surely as I wish the joys of heav'n.

MEL. . What other sin hath arm'd thy heart against thee?

MARY. . Ah! not alone through hate; through lawless love  
Have I still more abus'd the sov'reign good.  
My heart was vainly turn'd towards the man,  
Who left me in misfortune, who deceiv'd me.

MEL. . Repent'st thou of the sin? And hast thou turn'd  
Thy heart, from this idolatry, to God?

MARY. . It was the hardest trial I have pass'd;  
This last of earthly bonds is torn asunder.

MEL. . What other sin disturbs thy guilty conscience?

MARY. . A bloody crime, indeed of ancient date,  
And long ago confess'd; yet with new terrors  
It now attacks me, black and grisly steps  
Across my path, and shuts the gates of heav'n:  
By my connivance fell the king, my husband—  
I gave my hand and heart to a seducer—  
By rigid penance I have made atonement;  
Yet in my soul the worm is gnawing still.

- MEL. . Has then thy heart no other accusation,  
Which hath not been confess'd and wash'd away?
- MARY. . All you have heard, with which my heart is charg'd.
- MEL. . Think on the presence of Omniscience;  
Think on the punishments, with which the church  
Threatens imperfect, and reserv'd confession!  
This is the sin to everlasting death,  
For this is sinning 'gainst his Holy Spirit.
- MARY. . So may eternal grace with victory  
Crown my last contest, as I wittingly  
Have nothing hid—
- MELVIL. . How? Wilt thou then conceal  
The crime from God, for which thou art condemn'd?  
Thou tell'st me nothing of the share thou hadst  
In Babington, and Parry's bloody treason:  
Thou diest for this a temporal death; for this  
Wilt thou too die the everlasting death?
- MARY. . I am prepar'd to meet eternity;  
Within the narrow limits of an hour,  
I shall appear before my judge's throne;  
But, I repeat it, my confession's ended.
- MEL. . Consider well—the heart is a deceiver.  
Thou hast perhaps, with sly equivocation,  
The word avoided, which would make thee guilty,  
Although thy will was party to the crime.  
Remember, that no juggler's tricks can blind  
The eye of fire which darts through ev'ry breast
- MARY. . 'Tis true, that I have call'd upon all princes  
To free me from unworthy chains; yet 'tis  
As true, that neither by intent or deed,  
Have I attempted my oppressor's life.
- MEL. . Your secretaries then have witness'd falsely.
- MARY. . It is, as I have said;—what they have witness'd  
The Lord will judge.
- MELVIL. . Thou mount'st then, satisfied  
Of thy own innocence, the fatal scaffold?
- MARY. . God suffers me in mercy to atone,  
By undeserved death, my youth's transgressions.
- MELVIL. . *(making over her the sign of the cross).*  
Go, then, and expiate them all by death;  
Sink a devoted victim on the altar,  
Thus shall thy blood atone the blood thou 'st spilt.

~~From female frailty were deriv'd thy faults,~~  
 Free from the weakness of mortality,  
 The spotless spirit seeks the blest abodes.  
 Now then, by the authority which God  
 Hath unto me committed, I absolve thee  
 From all thy sins—be as thy faith thy welfare!

*[He gives her the host.]*

Receive the body which for thee was offer'd—

*[He takes the cup which stands upon the table, consecrates it with silent prayer, then presents it to her; she hesitates to take it, and makes signs to him to withdraw it.]*

Receive the blood, which for thy sins was shed—  
 Receive it—'tis allow'd thee by the Pope,  
 To exercise in death the highest office  
 Of kings, the holy office of the priesthood.

*[She takes the cup.]*

And as thou now in this his earthly body  
 Hast held with God mysterious communion,  
 So may'st thou henceforth, in his realm of joy,  
 Where sin no more exists, nor tears of woe,  
 A fair transfigur'd spirit, join thyself  
 For ever with the Godhead, and for ever.

*[He sets down the cup; hearing a noise, he covers his head, and goes to the door; Mary remains in silent devotion, on her knees.]*

MILIAM *(returning)*. A painful conflict is in store for thee;  
 Feel'st thou within thee strength enough to smother  
 Each impulse of malignity and hate?

MARY. I fear not a relapse. I have to God  
 Devoted both my hatred, and my love.

MET. Well, then, prepare thee to receive my Lords  
 Of Leicester and of Burleigh. They are here.

#### SCENE VIII.

*Enter BURLEIGH, LEICESTER, and PAULET.*

*[LEICESTER remains in the back-ground, without raising his eyes; BURLEIGH, who remarks his confusion, steps between him and the QUEEN.]*

BUR. I come, my Lady Stuart, to receive  
 Your last commands and wishes.

MARY.

Thanks, my Lord.

BUR. . It is the pleasure of my royal mistress,  
That nothing reasonable be denied you.

MARY. . My will, my Lord, declares my last desires;  
I've plac'd it in the hand of Sir Amias,  
And humbly beg, that it may be fulfill'd.

PAUL. . You may rely on this.

MARY. . I beg that all  
My servants unmolested may return  
To France, or Scotland, as their wishes lead.

BUR. . It shall be as you wish.

MARY. . And since my body  
Is not to rest in consecrated ground,  
I pray you suffer this my faithful servant  
To bear my heart to France, to my relations—  
~~Alas! 'twas ever there.~~

BURLEIGH. . It shall be done.

What wishes else?

MARY. . Unto her Majesty  
Of England bear a sister's salutation;  
Tell her, that from the bottom of my heart  
I pardon her my death: ~~most~~ humbly too  
I crave her to forgive me for the passion  
With which I spoke to her. May God preserve her,  
And bless her with a long and prosp'rous reign!

BUR. . Say, do you still adhere to your resolve,  
And still refuse assistance from the Dean?

MARY. . My Lord, I've made my peace with God.

[To PAULET. Good Sir,

I have unwittingly caused you much sorrow,—  
Bereft you of your age's only stay.

Oh, let me hope you do not hate my name.

PAULET (*giving her his hand*).

The Lord be with you! go your way in peace.

#### SCENE IX.

HANNAH KENNEDY, and the other women of the QUEEN crowd  
into the room, with marks of horror. The SHERIFF follows  
them, a white staff in his hand; behind are seen, through the  
open doors, men under arms.

MARY. . What ails thee, Hannah?—Yes—my hour is come—  
The Sheriff comes to lead me to my fate,  
And part we must—farewell!—

KENNEDY and CURL.

We will not leave thee,

We will not part from thee.

MARY (to MELVIL).

You, worthy Sir,

And my dear faithful Hannah, shall attend me,

In my last moments. ~~For sure, my Lord~~

Will not refuse my heart this consolation.

BUR. . For this I have no warrant.

MARY.

How, my Lord ;

Can you deny me then this small petition ?

Respect my sex ; who shall attend me else,

And yield me the last service ?—sure it never

Can be my sister's pleasure, that in me

My sex should be insulted ; that these men

With their rude hands, should touch my royal person.

BUR. . 'Tis order'd that no woman shall ascend

The scaffold steps with you—their tears and moans—

MARY. . She shall not weep, my Lord, she shall not moan ;

I answer for my Hannah's resolution.

Be merciful ; divide me not so soon

From my true foster-mother, from my friend.

She bore me on her arms into this life,

Let her then gently lead me to my death.

PAULET (to BURLEIGH).

Yield to her wishes.

BURLEIGH.

Be it so.

MARY.

I now

Have nothing in this world to wish for more.

*[She takes the crucifix, and kisses it.*

My God ! My Comforter ! My blest Redeemer !

As once thy arms were stretch'd upon the cross,

Let them be now extended to receive me !

*[She turns round to go, at the same moment her eyes fall upon LEICESTER, who, on her going, starts involuntarily and turns his eyes towards her : at this sight MARY trembles, her knees fail her, she is about to fall, when LEICESTER catches at her, and receives her in his arms ; she regards him for some time earnestly, and in silence ; he cannot support her looks ; at length she speaks.*

You keep your word, my Lord of Leicester : for

You promised me your arm to lead me forth

From prison, and you lend it to me now.

At length the wish'd for day is come, and what  
 Was oft the object of my fondest dreams  
 Is now accomplish'd: and the Earl of Leicester,  
 The long expected, the long wish'd for friend,  
 Appears at length in Fotheringay Castle.

I see him standing in my prison; all  
 Is ready for the journey; all the gates  
 Stand open, and at length I cross the threshold,  
 Conducted by his hand; and now I leave  
 These dismal walls behind me, and for ever.  
 All is fulfill'd, and you have sav'd your honour

*[He stands as if annihilated; she continues, with a gentle voice.]*

Yes, Leicester; not for liberty alone  
 I wish'd to be indebted to your hands.  
 You should have made me bless that liberty.  
 Led by your hand, and happy in your love,  
 I hop'd once more to taste the joys of life.  
 Yes; now that I'm prepar'd from all the world  
 To part, and to become a happy spirit,  
 Whom earthly inclinations tempt no more,  
 Now, Leicester, I may venture to confess  
 Without a blush, the frailty I have conquer'd—  
 Farewell, my lord; and, if you can, be happy!  
 To woo two Queens has been your daring aim;  
 You have disdain'd a tender, loving heart;  
 Betray'd it, in the hope to win a proud one:  
 Kneel at the feet of Queen Elizabeth!  
 May your reward not prove your punishment.  
 Farewell; I now have nothing more on earth.

*[She goes, preceded by the Sheriff, at her side  
 MEIVIL and her Nurse, BURLEIGH and PAULET  
 follow, the others wailing, follow her with their  
 eyes till she disappears; they then retire through  
 the other two doors.]*

# SCENE X.

LEICESTER (*remaining alone*).

Do I live still? Can I still bear to live?  
 Will not this roof fall down and bury me?  
 Yawns no abyss, to swallow in its gulph  
 The veriest wretch on earth? What have I lost?



Oh, what a pearl have I not cast away!  
~~What bliss celestial madly dash'd aside!~~  
 She's gone, a spirit purged from earthly stain,  
 And the despair of hell remains for me!  
 Where is the purpose now with which I came,  
 To stifle my heart's voice in callous scorn?  
 To see her head descend upon the block  
 With unaverted and indifferent eyes?  
 How doth her presence wake my slumbering shame?  
 Must she in death surround me with Love's toils?  
 Lost, wretched man! No more it suits thee now  
 To melt away, in womanly compassion:  
 Love's golden bliss lies not upon thy path.  
 Then arm thy breast in panoply of steel,  
 And henceforth be thy brows of adamant!  
 Wouldst thou not lose the garb of thy guilt,  
 Thou must uphold, complete it daringly!  
 Pity be dumb; mine eyes be petrified!  
 I'll see—I will be witness of her fall.

*[He advances with resolute steps towards the door,  
 through which MARY passed; but stops suddenly  
 half way.]*

No! No! The terrors of all Hell possess me.  
 I cannot look upon the dreadful deed;  
 I cannot see her die!—Hark! What was that?  
 They are already there. Beneath my feet  
 The bloody business is preparing. Hark!  
 I hear their voices—Hence!—Away—Away—  
 From this abode of misery and death!

*[He attempts to escape by another door; finds it  
 locked, and returns.]*

How! Does some demon chain me to this spot?  
 To hear, what I would shudder to behold?  
 That voice—it is the Dean's, exhorting her;  
 She interrupts him. Hark—she prays aloud—  
 Her voice is firm—now all is still, quite still!  
 And sobs and women's moans are all I hear.  
 Now, they undress her—they remove the stool—  
 She kneels upon the cushion—lays her head—

*[Having spoken these last words, and paused awhile,  
 he is seen with a convulsive motion suddenly to  
 shrink, and faint away; a confused hum of*

*voices is heard at the same moment from below,  
and continues for some time.*

## SCENE XI.

*The second Chamber in the Fourth Act.*

ELIZABETH (*entering from a side door; her gait and action expressive of the most violent uneasiness*).

No message yet arrived! What! no one here!  
Will evening never come! Stands the sun still  
In its ethereal course? I can no more  
Remain upon the rack of expectation!  
Is it accomplish'd?—Is it not?—I shudder  
At both events, and do not dare to ask.  
My Lord of Leicester comes not,—Burleigh too,  
Whom I appointed to fulfil the sentence.  
If they have quitted London, then 'tis done,  
'The bolt has left its rest—it cuts the air—  
It strikes;—has struck already:—were my realm  
At stake, I could not now arrest its course.  
Who's there?

## SCENE XII.

*Enter a PAGE.*

ELIZABETH. Return'd alone? Where are the Lords?

PAGE. My Lord High Treasurer, and the Earl of Leicester—

ELIZ. Where are they?

PAGE. They are not in London.

ELIZ. No!

Where are they then?

PAGE. That no one could inform me;

Before the dawn, mysteriously, in haste,

They quitted London.

ELIZABETH (*exultingly*). I am Queen of England!

[*Walking up and down in the greatest agitation.*]

Go—call me—no, remain, boy! She is dead—

Now have I room upon the earth at last

Why do I shake? Whence comes this agueish dread?

My fears are cover'd by the grave; who dares

To say I did it?—I have tears enough

In store to weep her fall.—Are you still here?

[*To the PAGE*]

Command my secretary Davison

To come to me this instant. Let the Earl  
Of Shrewsbury be summon'd. Here he comes.

*[Exit Page.]*

SCENE XIII. \*

*Enter SHREWSBURY.*

ELIZ . Welcome, my noble Lord. What tidings—say ?  
It cannot be a trifle which hath led  
Your footsteps hither at so late an hour.

SHREW. My Liege, the doubts that hung upon my heart,  
And dutiful concern for your fair fame,  
Directed me this morning to the Tower,  
Where Mary's secretaries, Nau and Curl,  
Are now confined as pris'ners, for I wish'd  
Once more to put their evidence to proof.  
On my arrival the lieutenant seem'd  
Embarras'd and perplex'd; refus'd to show me  
His pris'ners; but my threats obtain'd admittance.  
God! what a sight was there! With frantic looks,  
With hair dishevell'd, on his pallet lay  
The Scot, like one tormented by a fury.  
The miserable man no sooner saw me,  
'Then at my feet he fell, and there, with screams,  
Clasping my knees, and writhing like a worm,  
Implored, conjured me to acquaint him with  
His sov'reign's destiny, for vague reports  
Had somehow reach'd the dungeons of the tow'r,  
'That she had been condemn'd to suffer death.  
When I confirm'd these tidings, adding too,  
That on his evidence she had been doom'd,—  
He started wildly up,—caught by the throat  
His fellow pris'ner; with the giant strength  
Of madness tore him to the ground, and tried  
To strangle him. No sooner had we sav'd  
The wretch from his fierce grapple, than at once  
He turn'd his rage against himself, and beat  
His breast with savage fists; then curs'd himself  
And his companions to the depths of hell!  
His evidence was false; the fatal letters  
To Babington, which he had sworn were true,  
He now denounc'd as forgeries—for he  
Had set down words the Queen had never spoken.  
The traitor Nau had led him to this treason.

Then ran he to the casement, threw it wide  
 With frantic force, and cried into the street  
 So loud, that all the people gather'd round.  
 I am the man, Queen Mary's secretary,  
 The traitor, who accus'd his mistress falsely;  
 I bore false witness, and am cursed for ever!

ELIZ. . You said yourself, that he had lost his wits;  
 A madman's words prove nothing.

SHIREWSBURY. Yet this madness

Serves in itself to swell the proof. My Liege,  
 Let me conjure thee; be not over hasty;  
 Pri'thee, give order for a new inquiry!

ELIZ. . I will, my Lord, because it is your wish,  
 Not that I can believe my noble peers  
 Have in this case pronounced a hasty judgment.  
 To set your mind at rest, the inquiry shall  
 Be straight renew'd. Well, that 'tis not too late!—  
 Upon the honour of our royal name  
 No, not the shadow of a doubt shall rest.

SCENE XIV.

*Enter DAVISON.*

ELIZ. . The sentence, Sir, which I but late entrusted  
 Unto your keeping;—where is it?

DAVISON (*in the utmost astonishment*). The sentence!

ELIZABETH (*more urgent*).

Which yesterday I gave into your charge.

DAV. . Into my charge, my Liege!

ELIZABETH. The people urged

And baited me to sign it. I perforce  
 Was driven to yield obedience to their will.

I did so; did so, on extreme constraint,  
 And in your hands deposited the paper.

To gain time was my purpose; you remember,  
 What then I told you. Now, the paper, Sir!

SHIREW. Restore it, Sir, affairs have changed since then,  
 The inquiry must be set on foot anew.

DAV. . Anew! Eternal mercy!

ELIZABETH. . Why this pause.

This hesitation? Where, Sir, is the paper?

DAV. . I am undone! Undone! My fate is sealed!

ELIZABETH (*interrupting him violently*).

Let me not fancy, Sir—

DAVISON.

O, I am lost!

I have it not.

ELIZABETH.

How? What?

SHREWSBURY.

O, God in heav'n!

DAV. . It is in Burleigh's hands—since yesterday.

ELIZ. . Wretch! Is it thus you have obeyed my orders?

Did I not lay my strict injunction on you

'To keep it carefully?

DAVISON.

No such injunction

Was laid on me, my Liege.

ELIZABETH.

Give me the lie?

Opprobrious wretch! When did I order you

'To give the paper into Burleigh's hands?

DAV. . Never expressly in so many words.—

ELIZ. . And, paltering villain! dare you then presume,

'To construe, as you list, my words—and lay

Your bloody meaning on them? Wo betide you,

If evil come of this officious deed!

Your life shall answer the event to me.

Earl Shrewsbury, you see how my good name

Has been abused!

SHREWSBURY.

I see! O, God in heav'n!

ELIZ. . What say you?

SHREWSBURY.

If the Knight has dar'd to act

In this, upon his own authority,

Without the knowledge of your majesty,

He must be cited to the Court of Peers

'To answer there for subjecting thy name

'To the abhorrence of all after time

## SCENE XV.

*Enter BURLEIGH.*BURLEIGH (*bowing his knee before the Queen*).

Long life and glory to my royal mistress,

And may all enemies of her dominions

End like this Stuart.

[SHREWSBURY *hides his face*.—DAVISON *wrings his hands in despair*.

ELIZABETH.

Speak, my Lord; did you

From me receive the warrant?

BURLEIGH.

No, my Queen;

From Davison.

ELIZABETH. And did he in my name  
Deliver it?

BURLEIGH. No, that I cannot say.

ELIZ. . And dar'd you then to execute the writ  
Thus hastily, nor wait to know my pleasure?  
Just was the sentence—we are free from blame  
Before the world; yet it behoved thee not  
To intercept our natural clemency.  
For this, my Lord, I banish you my presence;  
And as this forward will was *yours* alone  
Bear *you* alone the curse of the misdeed! [To DAY.  
For, you, Sir; who have trait'rously o'erstepp'd  
The bounds of your commission, and betray'd  
A sacred pledge entrusted to your care,  
A more severe tribunal is prepar'd:  
Let him be straight conducted to the Tow'r,  
And capital arraignments fill'd against him.  
My honest Talbot, you alone have prov'd,  
'Mongst all my counsellors, an upright man:  
You shall henceforward be my guide—my friend.

SHREW. O! banish not the truest of your friends;  
Nor cast those into prison, who for you  
Have acted; who for you are silent now.  
But suffer me, great Queen, to give the seal,  
Which, these twelve years, I've borne unworthily,  
Back to your royal hands, and take my leave.

ELIZABETH (*surprised*).

~~Shrewsbury~~ Shrewsbury; you surely would not now  
~~assert~~ assert me? No; not now.

~~My~~ Pardon, I am  
~~too~~ old, and this right hand is grown too stiff  
To set the seal upon your later deeds.

ELIZ. . Will he forsake me, who has sav'd my life?

SHREW. 'Tis little I have done;—I could not save  
Your nobler part. Live—govern happily!  
Your rival's dead. Henceforth you've nothing more  
To fear,—henceforth, to nothing pay regard. [*Exit.*

ELIZABETH (*to the EARL of KENT, who enters*).

Send for the Earl of Leicester.

KENT. He desires

To be excused—he is embark'd for France.

*The Curtain drops.*

# THE MAID OF ORLEANS.

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## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CHARLES THE SEVENTH, <i>King of France.</i>	AN ENGLISH HERALD.
QUEEN ISABEL, <i>his Mother.</i>	THIBAUT D'ARC, <i>a wealthy Countryman.</i>
AGNES SOREL.	MARGOT, LOUISE, JOHANNA, <i>his daughters.</i>
PHILIP THE GOOD, <i>Duke of Burgundy.</i>	ETIENNE, CLAUDE MARIE, RAIMOND, <i>their Suitors.</i>
EARL DUNOIS, <i>Bastard of Orleans.</i>	BERTRAND, <i>another Countryman.</i>
LA HIRE, DUCHÂTEL, <i>French Officers.</i>	<i>Apparition of a black Knight.</i>
ARCHBISHOP OF RHEIMS.	CHARCOAL-BURNER AND HIS WIFE.
CHATILLON, <i>a Burgundian Knight.</i>	<i>Soldiers and People. Officers of the Crown. Bishops, Monks, Marshals, Magistrates, Courtiers, and other mute persons in the Coronation Procession.</i>
RAOUL, <i>a Lotharingian Knight.</i>	
TALBOT, <i>the English General.</i>	
LIONEL, FASTOLFE, <i>English Officers.</i>	
MONTGOMERY, <i>a Welshman.</i>	
COUNCILLORS OF ORLEANS.	

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## PROLOGUE.

*A rural District. To the right, a Chapel with an Image of the Virgin; to the left, an ancient Oak.*

### SCENE I.

THIBAUT D'ARC. *His three Daughters. Three young Shepherds, their Suitors.*

THIB. . Ay, my good neighbours! we at least to-day  
Are Frenchmen still, free citizens and lords  
Of the old soil, which our forefathers till'd.  
Who knows whom we to-morrow must obey?  
For England her triumphal banner waves  
From every wall; the blooming fields of France  
Are trampled down beneath her chargers' hoofs;  
Paris hath yielded to her conquering arms,

And with the ancient crown of Dagobert  
 Adorns the scion of a foreign race.  
 Our king's descendant, disinherited,  
 Must steal in secret through his own domain ;  
 While his first peer and nearest relative  
 Contends against him in the hostile ranks ;  
 Ay, his unnatural mother leads them on.  
 Around us towns and peaceful hamlets burn.  
 Near and more near the devastating fire  
 Rolls toward these vales, which yet repose in peace.  
 —Therefore, good neighbours, I have now resolved,  
 While God still grants us safety, to provide  
 For my three daughters ; for 'midst war's alarms  
 Women require protection, and true love  
 Hath power to render lighter every load.

[*To the first Shepherd.*]

Come, Etienne ! You seek my Margot's hand.  
 Fields lying side by side and loving hearts  
 Promise a happy union !

[*To the second.*]

Claude ! You're silent,  
 And my Louison looks upon the ground ?  
 How, shall I separate two loving hearts  
 Because you have no wealth to offer me ?  
 Who now has wealth ? Our barns and homes afford  
 Spoil to the foe, and fuel to their fires.  
 In times like these, a husband's faithful breast  
 Affords the only shelter from the storm.

LOUIS. My father !

CLAUDE MARIE. My Louison !

LOUISEON (*embracing JOHANNA*). My dear sister !

THIB. . I give to each a yard, a stall and herd,  
 And also thirty acres ; and as God  
 Gave me his blessing, so I give you mine !

MARGOT (*embracing JOHANNA*).  
 Gladden our father—follow our example !  
 Let this day see three unions ratified !

THIB. . Now go ; make all things ready ; for the morn  
 Shall see the wedding. Let our village friends  
 Be all assembled for the festival.

[*The two couple retire arm-in-arm*]



## SCENE II.

THIBAUT, RAIMOND, JOHANNA.

THIB. . Thy sisters, Joan, will soon be happy brides;  
 I see them gladly, they rejoice thy age;  
 But thou, my youngest, giv'st me grief and pain.

RAIM. . What is the matter? Why upbraid thy child?

THIB. . Here is this noble youth, the flower and pride  
 Of all our village; he hath fix'd on thee  
 His fond affections, and for three long years  
 Has woo'd thee with respectful tenderness;  
 But thou dost thrust him back, with cold reserve,  
 Nor is there one 'mong all our shepherd youths  
 Who e'er can win a gracious smile from thee.  
 —I see thee blooming in thy youthful prime;  
 Thy spring it is, the joyous time of hope;  
 Thy person, like a tender flower, hath now  
 Disclos'd its beauty, but I vainly wait  
 For love's sweet blossom genially to blow,  
 And ripen joyously to golden fruit!  
 Oh that must ever grieve me, and betrays  
 Some sad deficiency in nature's work!  
 The heart I like not, which, severe and cold,  
 Expands not in the genial years of youth.

RAIM. . Forbear, good father! Cease to urge her thus!  
 A noble tender fruit of heavenly growth  
 Is my Johanna's love, and time alone  
 Bringeth the costly to maturity!  
 Still she delights to range among the hills,  
 And fears descending from the wild free heath,  
 To tarry 'neath the lowly roofs of men,  
 Where dwell the narrow cares of humble life.  
 From the deep vale, with silent wonder, oft  
 I mark her, when, upon a lofty hill  
 Surrounded by her flock, erect she stands,  
 With noble port, and bends her earnest gaze  
 Down on the small domains of earth. To me  
 She looketh then, as if from other times  
 She came, foreboding things of import high.

**THIB.** . 'Tis that precisely which displeases me !  
 She shuns her sisters' gay companionship ;  
 Seeks out the desert mountains, leaves her couch  
 Before the crowing of the morning cock,  
 And in the dreaded hour, when men are wont  
 Confidingly to seek their fellow-men,  
 She, like the solitary bird, creeps forth,  
 And in the fearful spirit-realm of night,  
 To yon crossway repairs, and there alone  
 Holds secret commune with the mountain wind.  
 Wherefore this place precisely doth she choose ?  
 Why hither always doth she drive her flock ?  
 For hours together I have seen her sit  
 In dreamy musing 'neath the Druid tree.  
 Which every happy creature shuns with awe.  
 For 'tis not holy there ; an evil spirit  
 Hath since the fearful pagan days of old  
 Beneath its branches fix'd his dread abode.  
 The oldest of our villagers relate  
 Strange tales of horror of the Druid tree ;  
 Mysterious voices of unearthly sound  
 From its unhallow'd shade oft meet the ear.  
 Myself, when in the gloomy twilight hour  
 My path once chanc'd to lead me near this tree,  
 Beheld a spectral figure sitting there,  
 Which slowly from its long and ample robe  
 Stretch'd forth its wither'd hand, and beckon'd me ,  
 But on I went with speed, nor look'd behind,  
 And to the care of God consign'd my soul.

**RAYMOND** (*pointing to the image of the Virgin*).  
 Yon holy image of the Virgin blest,  
 Whose presence heavenly peace diffuseth round,  
 Not Satan's work, leadeth thy daughter here.

**THIB.** . No ! not in vain hath it in fearful dreams  
 And apparitions strange reveal'd itself.  
 For three successive nights I have beheld  
 'Johanna sitting on the throne at Rheims,  
 A sparkling diadem of seven stars  
 Upon her brow, the sceptre in her hand,  
 From which three lilies sprung, and I, her sire,

With her two sisters, and the noble peers.  
The earls, archbishops, and the King himself,  
Bow'd down before her. In my humble home,  
How could this splendour enter my poor brain?  
Oh, 'tis the prelude to some fearful fall!  
This warning dream, in pictur'd show, reveals  
'The vain and sinful longing of her heart.  
She looks with shame upon her lowly birth.  
Because with richer beauty God hath grac'd  
Her form, and dower'd her with wondrous gifts  
Above the other maidens of this vale,  
She in her heart indulges sinful pride,  
And pride it is, through which the angels fell,  
By which the fiend of Hell seduces man.

**RAIM.** . Who cherishes a purer, humbler mind  
Than doth thy pious daughter? Does she not  
With cheerful spirit work her sisters' will?  
She is more highly gifted far than they,  
Yet, like a servant maiden, it is she  
Who silently performs the humblest tasks.  
Beneath her guiding hands prosperity  
Attendeth still thy harvests and thy flocks;  
And around all she does there ceaseless flows  
A blessing, rare and unaccountable.

**THIB.** . Ay truly! Unaccountable indeed!  
Sad horror at this blessing seizes me!  
— But now no more; henceforth I will be silent.  
Shall I accuse my own beloved child?  
I can do nought but warn and pray for her.  
Yet warn I must.—O shun the Druid tree!  
Stay not alone, and in the midnight hour  
Break not the ground for roots, no drinks prepare,  
No characters inscribe upon the sand!  
'Tis easy to unlock the realm of spirits;  
Listening each sound, beneath a film of earth  
They lie in wait, ready to rush aloft.  
Stay not alone, for in the wilderness  
The prince of darkness tempted e'en our Lord.

## SCENE III.

THIBAUT, RAIMOND, JOHANNA.

BERTRAND *enters, a helmet in his hand.*RAIM. . Hush! here is Bertrand coming back from town,  
What bears he in his hand?BERTRAND. You look at me  
With wondering gaze; no doubt you are surprised  
To see this martial helm!THIBAUT. We are indeed!  
Come, tell us how you came by it? Why bring  
This fearful omen to our peaceful vale?  
[JOHANNA, *who has remained indifferent during the  
two previous scenes, becomes attentive, and steps  
nearer.*BERT. . I scarce can tell you how I came by it.  
I had procur'd some tools at Vaucouleurs;  
A crowd was gather'd in the market-place,  
For fugitives were just arriv'd in haste  
From Orleans, bringing most disastrous news.  
In tumult all the town together flock'd,  
And as I forc'd a passage through the crowds,  
A brown Bohemian woman, with this helm,  
Approach'd me, eyed me narrowly, and said:  
"Fellow, you seek a helm; I know it well.  
Take this one! For a trifle it is yours."  
"Go with it to the soldiers," I replied,  
"I am a husbandman, and want no helm."  
She would not cease, however, and went on:  
"None knoweth if he may not want a helm.  
A roof of metal for the head just now  
Is of more value than a house of stone."  
Thus she pursued me closely through the streets,  
Still offering the helm, which I refused.  
I mark'd it well, and saw that it was bright,  
And fair and worthy of a knightly head;  
And when in doubt I weigh'd it in my hand,  
The strangeness of the incident revolving,  
The woman disappear'd, for suddenly  
The rushing crowd had carried her away,

And I was left, the helmet in my hand.

JOHANNA (*attempting eagerly to seize it*).

Give me the helmet!

BERTRAND.

Why, what boots it you?

It is not suited to a maiden's head.

JOHANNA (*seizing it from him*).

Mine is the helmet—it belongs to me!

THIB. . What whim is this?

RAIMOND.

Nay, let her have her way!

This warlike ornament becomes her well, .

For in her bosom beats a manly heart.

Remember how she once subdued the wolf,

The savage monster which destroyed our herds,

And fill'd the neighb'ring shepherds with dismay .

She all alone—the lion-hearted maid—

Fought with the wolf, and from him snatch'd the  
lamb,

Which he was bearing in his bloody jaws.

How brave soe'er the head this helm adorn'd,

It cannot grace a worthier one than hers!

THIBAUT (*to BERTRAND*).

Relate what new disasters have occurred.

What tidings brought the fugitives?

BERTRAND.

May God

Have pity on our land, and save the King!

In two great battles we have lost the day;

Our foes are station'd in the heart of France,

Far as the river Loire our lands are theirs—

Now their whole force they have combined, and lay

Close siege to Orleans.

THIBAUT.

God protect the King!

BERT. . Artillery is brought from every side,

And as the dusky squadrons of the bees

Swarm round the hive upon a summer day,

As clouds of locusts from the sultry air

Descend and shroud the country round for miles,

So doth the cloud of war, o'er Orleans' fields,

Pour forth its many-nationed multitudes,

Whose varied speech, in wild confusion blent,

With strange and hollow murmurs fills the air.

For Burgundy, the mighty potentate,

Conducts his motley host; the Hennegarians,  
 The men of Liege and of Luxemburg,  
 The people of Namur, and those who dwell  
 In fair Brabant; the wealthy men of Ghent,  
 Who boast their velvets, and their costly silks;  
 The Zealanders, whose cleanly towns appear  
 Emerging from the ocean; Hollanders  
 Who milk the lowing herds; men from Utrecht,  
 And even from West Friesland's distant realm,  
 Who look towards the ice-pole—all combine,  
 Beneath the banner of the powerful duke,  
 Together to accomplish Orleans' fall.

THIB. . Oh the unblest, the lamentable strife,  
 Which turns the arms of France against itself!

BERT. . E'en she, the Mother-Queen, proud Isabel—  
 Bavaria's haughty princess—may be seen,  
 Array'd in armour, riding through the camp;  
 With poisonous words of irony she fires  
 The hostile troops to fury 'gainst her son,  
 Whom she hath clasp'd to her maternal breast

THIB. . A curse upon her, and may God prepare  
 For her a death like haughty Jezebel's!

BERT. . The fearful Sal'sbury conducts the siege,  
 The town-destroyer; with him Lionel,  
 The brother of the lion; Talbot, too,  
 Who, with his murd'rous weapon, moweth down  
 The people in the battle: they have sworn,  
 With ruthless insolence, to doom to shame  
 The hapless maidens, and to sacrifice  
 All who the sword have wielded, with the sword.  
 Four lofty watch-towers, to o'ertop the town,  
 They have uprear'd; Earl Sal'sbury from on high  
 Casteth abroad his cruel, murd'rous glance,  
 And marks the rapid wanderers in the streets.  
 Thousands of cannon balls, of pond'rous weight,  
 Are hurl'd into the city. Churches lie  
 In ruin'd heaps, and Nôtre Dame's royal tower  
 Begins at length to bow its lofty head.  
 They also have form'd powder-vaults below,  
 And thus, above a subterranean hell,  
 The timid city every hour expects,

Midst crashing thunder, to break forth in flames.

[*JOHANNA listens with close attention, and places the helmet on her head.*

THIB. . But where were then our heroes? Where the swords  
Of Saintrailles, and La Hire, and brave Dunois,  
Of France the bulwark, that the haughty foe  
With such impetuous force thus onward rushed?  
Where is the King? Can he supinely see  
His kingdom's peril, and his cities' fall?

BERT. . The King at Chinon holds his court; he lacks  
Soldiers to keep the field. Of what avail  
The leader's courage, and the hero's arm,  
When pallid fear doth paralyze the host?  
A sudden panic, as if sent from God,  
Unnerves the courage of the bravest men.  
In vain the summons of the King resounds  
As when the howling of the wolf is heard,  
The sheep in terror gather side by side,  
So Frenchmen, careless of their ancient fame,  
Seek only now the shelter of the towns.  
One knight alone, I have been told, has brought  
A feeble company, and joins the King  
With sixteen banners.

JOHANNA (*quickly*). What's the hero's name?

BERT. . 'Tis Baudricour. But much I fear the knight  
Will not be able to elude the foe,  
Who track him closely with two numerous hosts.

JOHAN. . Where halts the knight? Pray tell me, if you know

BERT. . About a one day's march from Vaucouleurs.

THIBAUT (*to JOHANNA*).

Why, what is that to thee? Thou dost inquire  
Concerning matters which become thee not.

BERT. . The foe being now so strong, and from the King  
No safety to be hoped, at Vaucouleurs  
They have with unanimity resolved  
To yield them to the Duke of Burgundy.  
Thus we avoid a foreign yoke, and still  
Continue by our ancient royal line;  
Ay, to the ancient crown we may fall back  
Should France and Burgundy be reconcil'd.

JOHANNA (*as if inspired*).

Speak not of treaty! Speak not of surrender!  
The Saviour comes, he arms him for the fight.  
The fortunes of the foe before the walls  
Of Orleans shall be wreck'd! His hour is come,  
He now is ready for the reaper's hand,  
And with her sickle will the maid appear,  
And now to earth the harvest of his pride.  
She from the heavens will tear his glory down,  
Which he had hung aloft, among the stars;  
Despair not! Fly not! for ere yonder corn  
Assumes its golden hue, or ere the moon  
Displays her perfect orb, no English horse  
Shall drink the rolling waters of the Loire.

BERT. . Alas! no miracle will happen now!

JOHAN. Yes, there shall yet be one—a snow-white dove  
Shall fly, and with the eagle's boldness, tear  
The birds of prey, which rend her Fatherland.  
She shall o'erthrow this haughty Burgundy,  
Betrayed of the kingdom; Talbot, too,  
The hundred-handed, heaven-defying scourge;  
This Salisbury, who violates our fane,  
And all these island robbers shall she drive  
Before her like a flock of timid lambs.  
The Lord will be with her, the God of battle;  
A weak and trembling creature he will choose,  
And through a tender maid proclaim his power,  
For he is the Almighty!

THIBAUT.                                  What strange power  
Hath seized the maiden?

RAYMOND. Doubtless 'tis the helm  
Which doth inspire her with such martial thoughts  
Look at your daughter. Mark her flashing eye,  
Her glowing cheek, which kindles as with fire!

JOHAN This realm shall fall ! This ancient land of fame,  
The fairest that, in his majestic course,  
Th' eternal sun surveys—this paradise,  
Which, as the apple of his eye, God loves—  
Endure the fetters of a foreign yoke?  
—Here were the heathen scatter'd, and the cross



And holy image first were planted here ;  
Here rest Saint Louis' ashes, and from hence  
The troops went forth, who set Jerusalem free.

BERTRAND (*in astonishment*).

Hark how she speaks ! Why, whence can she obtain  
This glorious revelation ?—Father Arc !

A wond'rous daughter God hath given you !

JOHAN. We shall no longer serve a native prince !

The King, who never dies, shall pass away—

The guardian of the sacred plough, who fills

The earth with plenty, who protects our herds,

Who frees the bondmen from captivity,

Who gathers all his cities round his throne—

Who aids the helpless, and appals the base,

Who envies no one, for he reigns supreme ;

Who is a mortal, yet an angel too,

Dispensing mercy on the hostile earth.

For the King's throne, which glitters o'er with gold,

Affords a shelter for the destitute ;—

Power and compassion meet together there,

The guilty tremble, but the just draw near,

And with the guardian lion fearless sport !

The stranger king, who cometh from afar,

Whose fathers' sacred ashes do not he

Interr'd among us ; can he love our land ?

Who was not young among our youth, whose heart

Respondeth not to our familiar words,

Can he be as a father to our sons ?

THIB. . God save the King and France ! We're peaceful folk,

Who neither wield the sword, nor rein the steed.

—Let us await the King whom victory crowns ;

The fate of battle is the voice of God.

He is our Lord who crowns himself at Rheims,

And on his head receives the holy oil.

—Come, now to work ! come ! and let every one

Think only of the duty of the hour !

Let the earth's great ones for the earth contend,

Untroubled we may view the desolation,

For steadfast stand the acres which we till.

The flames consume our villages, our corn

Is trampled 'neath the tread of warlike steeds ;

With the new spring new harvests re-appear,  
And our light huts are quickly rear'd again !  
[*They all retire, except the Maiden.*]

## SCENE IV.

JOHANNA (*alone*).

Farewell, ye mountains, ye beloved glades,  
Ye lone and peaceful valleys, fare ye well !  
Through you Johanna never more may stray !  
For aye Johanna bids you now farewell.  
Ye meads which I have water'd, and ye trees  
Which I have planted, still in beauty bloom !  
Farewell ye grottos, and ye crystal springs !  
Sweet echo, vocal spirit of the vale,  
Who sang'st responsive to my simple strain,  
Johanna goes, and ne'er returns again.

Ye scenes where all my tranquil joys I knew,  
For ever now I leave you far behind !  
Poor foldless lambs, no shepherd now have you !  
O'er the wide heath stray henceforth unconfin'd !  
For I to danger's field, of crimson hue,  
Am summon'd hence, another flock to find.  
Such is to me the Spirit's high behest ;  
No earthly vain ambition fires my breast.

For who in glory did on Horeb's height  
Descend to Moses in the bush of flame,  
And bade him go and stand in Pharaoh's sight—  
Who once to Israel's pious shepherd came,  
And sent him forth, his champion in the fight,—  
Who aye hath loved the lowly shepherd train,—  
He, from these leafy boughs, thus spake to me,  
“ Go forth ! Thou shalt on earth my witness be.

“ Thou in rude armour must thy limbs invest,  
A' plate of steel upon thy bosom wear ;  
Vain earthly love may never stir thy breast,  
Nor passion's sinful glow be kindled there.  
Ne'er with the bride-wreath shall thy locks be dress'd,  
Nor on thy bosom bloom an infant fair ;

But war's triumphant glory shall be thine ;  
Thy martial fame all women's shall outshine.

" For when in fight the stoutest hearts despair,  
When direful ruin threatens France, forlorn,  
Then thou aloft my oriflamme shalt bear,  
And swiftly as the reaper mows the corn,  
Thou shalt lay low the haughty conqueror ;  
His fortune's wheel thou rapidly shalt turn,  
To Gaul's heroic sons deliverance bring,  
Relieve beleaguer'd Rheims, and crown thy king!"

The heavenly Spirit promised me a sign ;  
He sends the helmet, it hath come from him.  
Its iron filleth me with strength divine,  
I feel the courage of the cherubim ;  
As with the rushing of a mighty wind  
It drives me forth to join the battle's din ;  
The clanging trumpets sound, the chargers rear,  
And the loud war-cry thunders in mine ear.

[*She goes out.*

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ACT I.

SCENE I.

*The royal Residence at Chinon.*

DUNOIS and DU CHATEL.

DUNOIS. No longer I'll endure it. I renounce  
This recreant Monarch who forsakes himself.  
My valiant heart doth bleed, and I could rain  
Hot tear-drops from mine eyes, that robber-swords  
Partition thus the royal realm of France ;  
That cities, ancient as the monarchy,  
Deliver to the foe the rusty keys,  
While here in idle and inglorious ease  
We lose the precious season of redemption.  
—Tidings of Orleans' peril reach mine ear,  
Hither I sped from distant Normandy,  
Thinking, arrayed in panoply of war,  
To find the Monarch with his marshall'd hosts ;

And find him—here! begirt with troubadours,  
And juggling knaves, engaged in solving riddles,  
And planning festivals in Sorel's honour,  
As brooded o'er the land profoundest peace!  
—The Constable hath gone, he will not brook  
Longer the spectacle of shame.—I too  
Depart, and leave him to his evil fate.

DUCH. . Here comes the King.

SCENE II.

KING CHARLES. *The same.*

CHAS. . The Constable hath sent us back his sword  
And doth renounce our service. Now, by Heaven!  
e thus hath rid us of a churlish man,  
Who insolently sought to lord it o'er us.

DUNOIS. A man is precious in such perilous times;  
I would not deal thus lightly with his loss.

CHAS. . Thou speakest thus from love of opposition;  
While he was here, thou never wert his friend.

DUNOIS. He was a tiresome, proud, vexatious fool,  
Who never could resolve.—For once, however,  
He hath resolved. Betimes he goeth hence,  
Where honour can no longer be achieved.

CHAS. . Thou'rt in a pleasant humour; undisturb'd  
I'll leave thee to enjoy it.—Hark, Du Chatel!  
Ambassadors are here from old king René,  
Of tuneful song the master, far renowned.  
—Let them as honour'd guests be entertain'd,  
And unto each present a chain of gold.

*[To the bastard.]*

Why smilest thou Dunois?

DUNOIS. That from thy mouth  
Thou shakest golden chains.

DUCHATTEL. Alas! my King!  
No gold existeth in thy treasury.

CHAS. . Then gold must be procured.—It must not be  
That bards unhonour'd from our court depart.  
'Tis they who make our barren sceptre bloom,  
'Tis they who wreath around our fruitless crown  
Life's joyous branch, of never-fading green.

Reigning, they justly rank themselves as kings,  
Of gentle wishes they erect their throne,  
Their harmless realm existeth not in space;  
Hence should the bard accompany the king,  
Life's higher sphere the heritage of both!

DUCH. . My royal Liege! I sought to spare thine ear  
So long as aid and counsel could be found;  
Now dire necessity doth loose my tongue.  
—Nought hast thou now in presents to bestow,  
Thou hast not wherewithal to live to-morrow!  
The spring-tide of thy fortune is run out,  
And lowest ebb is in thy treasury!  
The soldiers, disappointed of their pay,  
With sullen murmurs, threaten to retire.  
My counsel faileth, not with royal splendour  
But meagerly, to furnish out thy household.

CHAS. . My royal customs pledge, and borrow gold  
From the Lombardians.

DUCHATEL. Sire, thy revenues,  
Thy royal customs, are for three years pledg'd.  
DUNOIS. And pledge meanwhile and kingdom both are lost.  
CHAS. . Still many rich and beauteous lands are ours.  
DUNOIS. So long as God and Talbot's sword permit!  
When Orleans falleth into English hands  
Then with King René thou may'st tend thy sheep!  
CHAS. . Still at this King thou lov'st to point thy jest;  
Yet 'tis this lackland Monarch, who to-day  
Hath with a princely crown invested me.  
DUNOIS. Not, in the name of heaven, with that of Naples,  
Which is for sale, I hear, since he kept sheep.  
CHAS. . It is a sportive festival, a jest,  
Wherein he giveth to his fancy play,  
To found a world all innocent and pure  
In this barbaric, rude reality.  
Yet noble—ay, right royal is his aim!  
He will again restore the golden age,  
When gentle manners reigned, when faithful love  
The heroic hearts of valiant knights inspired,  
And noble women, whose accomplished taste  
Diffuseth grace around, in judgment sat,  
The old man dwelleth in those bygone times,

And in our workday world would realize  
The dreams of ancient bards, who picture life  
'Mid bowers celestial, thron'd on golden clouds.—  
He hath established hence a court of love,  
Where valiant knights may dwell, and homage yield  
To noble women, who are there enthroned,  
And where pure love and true may find a home.  
Me he hath chosen as the prince of Love.

DUNOIS. I am not such a base degenerate churl,  
As Love's dominion rudely to assail.  
I am her son, from her derive my name,  
And in her kingdom lies my heritage.  
The prince of Orleans was my sire, and while  
No woman's heart was proof against his love,  
No hostile fortress could withstand his shoel !  
Wilt thou, indeed, with honour name thyself  
'The prince of Love—be bravest of the brave !  
As I have read in those old chronicles,  
Love aye went coupled with heroic deeds,  
And valiant heroes, not inglorious shepherds,  
So legends tell us, graced king Arthur's board  
The man whose valour is not beauty's shield,  
Is all unworthy of her golden prize.  
Here the arena !—combat for the crown.  
Thy royal heritage !—with knightly sword  
Thy lady's honour and thy realm defend—  
And hast thou with hot valour snatch'd the crown  
From streams of hostile blood,—then is the time,  
And it would well become thee as a prince, "  
Love's myrtle chaplet round thy brows to wreath.

CHARLES (*to a PAGE, who enters*).

What is the matter ?

PAGE. Senators from Orleans

Entreat an audience, Sire.

CHARLES. Conduct them hither !

[PAGE *retires*.]

Doubtless they succour need ; what can I do,  
Myself all-succourless !



DUNOIS.

That too!

CHARLES.

Well! What is it?

DUNOIS. Count Douglas sendeth here. The Scottish troops  
Revolt, and threaten to retire at once,  
Unless their full arrears are paid to-day.

CHAS. . Du Chatel!

DU CHATEL (*shrugs his shoulders*).

Sire! I know not what to counsel.

CHAS. . Pledge, promise all, even unto half my realm.—

CHAT. . 'Tis vain! They have been fed with hope too often!

CHAS. . They are the finest troops of all my host!

They must not now, not now abandon me!

SENATOR (*throwing himself at the KING's feet*).

Oh, King, assist us! Think of our distress!

CHARLES (*in despair*).

How! Can I summon armies from the earth?

Or grow a cornfield on my open palm?

Rend me in pieces!—Pluck my bleeding heart

Forth from my breast, and coin it 'stead of gold!

I've blood for you, but neither coin, nor troops.

[*He sees SOREL approach, and hastens towards  
her with outstretched arms.*]

## SCENE IV.

*The same.* AGNES SOREL, *a casket in her hand*

CHAS. . My Agnes! Oh, my love! my dearest life!

Thou comest here to snatch me from despair!

Refuge I take within thy loving arms;

Possessing thee, I feel that nought is lost.

SOREL. . My King, beloved!

[*Looking around with an anxious, inquiring gaze.*]

Dunois! Say, is it true,

Du Chatel?

DU CHATEL.

'Tis alas!

SOREL.

So great the need?

No treasure left? The soldiers will disband?

CHAT. . Alas! it is too true!

SOREL (*giving him the casket*). Here—here is gold.

Here too are jewels! Melt my silver down!

Sell, pledge my castles—on my fair domains



In Provence, treasure raise—turn all to gold,  
Appease the troops! No time is to be lost!

*[She urges him to depart.]*

CHAS. . Well now, Dunois! Du Chatel! Do ye still  
Account me poor, when I possess the crown  
Of womankind?—She's nobly born as I;  
The royal blood of Valois not more pure;  
The most exalted throne she would adorn—  
Yet she rejects it with disdain, and claims  
No other title than to be my love.  
No gift more costly will she e'er receive  
Than early flower in winter, or rare fruit!  
No sacrifice, on my part, she permits,  
Yet sacrificeth all she hath to me!  
With generous spirit she doth venture all  
Her wealth and fortune in my sinking bark.

DUNOIS. Ay, she is mad indeed, my King, as thou;  
She throws her all into a burning house,  
And draweth water in the leaky vessel  
Of the Danaides. Thee she will not save,  
And in thy ruin but involve herself.—

SOREL. . Believe him not! Full many a time he hath  
Perill'd his life for thee, and now forsooth,  
Chafeth, because I risk my worthless gold!  
How? Have I freely sacrificed to thee  
What is esteemed far more than gold and pearls,  
And shall I now hold back the gifts of fortune?  
Oh, come! Let my example challenge thee  
To noble self-denial! Let's at once  
Cast off the needless ornaments of life!  
Thy courtiers metamorphose into soldiers;  
Thy gold transmute to iron; all thou hast,  
With resolute daring, venture for thy crown!  
Peril and want we will participate!  
Let us bestride the war-horse, and expose  
Our tender person to the fiery glow  
Of the hot sun, take for our canopy  
The clouds above, and make the stones our pillow.  
The rudest warrior, when he sees his King  
Bear hardship and privation like the meanest,  
Will patiently endure his own hard lot!

CHARLES (*laughing*).

Ay! now is realized an ancient word  
Of prophecy, once uttered by a nun  
Of Clairmont, in prophetic mood, who said,  
That through a woman's aid I o'er my foes  
Should triumph, and achieve my father's crown.  
Far off I sought her in the English camp;  
I strove to reconcile a mother's heart;  
Here stands the heroine—my guide to Rheims!  
My Agnes! I shall triumph through thy love!

SOREL. Thou'lt triumph through the valiant swords of friends.

CHAS. . And from my foes' dissensions much I hope—  
For sure intelligence hath reach'd mine ear,  
That 'twixt these English lords and Burgundy  
Things do not stand precisely as they did;—  
Hence to the duke I have despatch'd La Hire,  
To try if he can lead my angry vassal  
Back to his ancient loyalty and faith:—  
Each moment now I look for his return.

DU CHATEL (*at the window*).

A knight e'en now dismounteth in the court.

CHAS. . A welcome messenger! We soon shall learn  
Whether we're doomed to conquer or to yield.

#### SCENE V.

*The same.* LA HIRE.

CHARLES (*meeting him*).

Hope bringest thou, or not? Be brief, La Hire!  
Out with thy tidings! What must we expect?

HIRE. . Expect nought, Sire, save from thine own good  
sword.

CHAS. . The haughty duke will not be reconciled!  
Speak! How did he receive my embassy?

HIRE. . His first and unconditional demand,  
Ere he consent to listen to thine errand,  
Is that Du Chatel be deliver'd up,  
Whom he doth name the murderer of his Sire.

CHAS. . This base condition we reject with scorn!

HIRE. . Then be the league dissolved ere it commence!

CHAS. . Hast thou thereon, as I commanded thee,

Challenged the duke to meet me in fair fight  
On Montereau's bridge, whereon his father fell?

HIRE. . Before him on the ground I flung thy glove,  
And said :—"Thou wouldst forget thy majesty,  
And like a knight do battle for thy realm."  
He scornfully rejoined—"He needed not  
To fight for that which he possess'd already.  
But if thou wert so eager for the fray,  
Before the walls of Orleans thou wouldst find him,  
Whither he purposed going on the morrow ;"  
Thereon he laughing turn'd his back upon me.

CHAS. . Say, did not justice raise her sacred voice,  
Within the precincts of my Parliament?

HIRE. . The rage of party, Sire, hath silenc'd her.  
An edict of the Parliament declares  
Thee, and thy race, excluded from the throne

DUNOIS. These upstart burghers' haughty insolence!

CHAS. . Hast thou attempted with my mother aught?

HIRE. . With her?

CHARLES. Ay! How did she demean herself?

LA HIRE (*after a few moments' reflection*).

I chanced to step within St. Denis' walls  
Precisely at the royal coronation.  
The crowds were dress'd as for a festival ;  
Triumphal arches rose in every street  
Through which the English monarch was to pass.  
The way was strewed with flowers, and with huzzas,  
As France some brilliant conquest had achieved,  
The people thronged around the royal car.

SOREL. They could huzza—huzza, while trampling thus  
Upon a gracious sovereign's loving heart!

HIRE. . I saw young Harry Lancaster—the boy—  
On good St. Lewis' regal chair enthroned ;  
On either side his haughty uncles stood,  
Bedford and Gloucester, and before him kneeled,  
To render homage for his lands, Duke Philip.

CHAS. . O peer dishonour'd! O unworthy cousin!

HIRE. . The child was timid, and his footing lost  
As up the steps he mounted towards the throne.  
An evil omen! murmured forth the crowd,  
And scornful laughter burst on every side.

Then forward stepped Queen Isabel—thy mother,  
And—but it angers me to utter it!

CHARLES.

Say on.

HIRE. . Within her arms she clasped the boy,  
And herself placed him on thy father's throne.

CHAS. . Oh, mother! mother!

LA HIRE.

E'en the murderous bands  
Of the Burgundians, at this spectacle,  
Evinced some tokens of indignant shame.  
The Queen perceived it, and addressed the crowds,  
Exclaiming with loud voice: "Be grateful, French-  
men,  
That I engraft upon a sickly stock  
A healthy scion, and redeem you from  
The misbegotten son of a mad Sire!"

*[The KING hides his face; Agnes hastens towards  
him and clasps him in her arms; all the by-  
standers express aversion and horror.]*

DUNOIS. She-wolf of France! Rage-breathing Megara!

CHARLES *(after a pause to the senators)*.

Yourselves have heard the posture of affairs.  
Delay no longer, back return to Orleans,  
And bear this message to my faithful town.  
I do absolve my subjects from their oath,  
Their own best interests let them now consult,  
And yield them to the Duke of Burgundy;  
'Yclept the Good, he needs must prove humane.

DUNOIS. What say'st thou, Sire? 'Thou wilt abandon Orleans!

SENATOR *(kneels down)*.

My King! Abandon not thy faithful town!  
Consign her not to England's harsh control.  
She is a precious jewel in thy crown,  
And none hath more inviolate faith maintain'd  
Towards the kings, thy royal ancestors.

DUNOIS. Have we been routed? Is it lawful, Sire,  
To leave the English masters of the field,  
Without a single stroke to save the town?  
And thinkest thou, with careless breath, forsooth,  
Ere blood hath flowed, rashly to give away  
The fairest city from the heart of France?

CHAS. . Blood hath been poured forth freely, and in vain!

The hand of Heaven is visibly against me;  
 In every battle is my host o'erthrown,  
 I am rejected of my parliament,  
 My capital, my people, hail my foe,  
 Those of my blood,—my nearest relatives,—  
 Forsake me and betray—and my own mother  
 Doth nurture at her breast the hostile brood.  
 —Beyond the Loire we will retire, and yield  
 To the o'ermastering hand of destiny  
 Which sideth with the English.

SOREL.

God forbid

That we in weak despair should quit this realm!  
 This utterance came not from thy heart, my King.  
 Thy noble heart, which hath been sorely riven  
 By the fell deed of thy unnatural mother!  
 Thou'lt be thyself again, right valiantly  
 Thou'lt battle with thine adverse destiny,  
 Which doth oppose thee with relentless ire.

CHARLES (*lost in gloomy thought*).

Is it not true? A dark and ominous doom  
 Impendeth o'er the heaven-abandon'd house  
 Of Valois—there preside the avenging powers,  
 To whom a mother's crimes unbarr'd the way.  
 For thirty years my sire in madness rav'd;  
 Already have three elder brothers been  
 Mow'd down by death; 'tis the decree of Heaven,  
 The house of the Sixth Charles is doom'd to fall.

SOREL.

In thee 'twill rise with renovated life!  
 Oh, in thyself have faith!—Believe me, King,  
 Not vainly hath a gracious destiny  
 Redeem'd thee from the ruin of thy house,  
 And by thy brethren's death exalted thee,  
 The youngest born, to an unlook'd for throne.  
 Heaven in thy gentle spirit hath prepar'd  
 The leech to remedy the thousand ills  
 By party rage inflicted on the land.  
 The flames of civil discord thou wilt quench,  
 And my heart tells me, thou'lt establish peace,  
 And found anew the monarchy of France.

CHAS. .

Not I! The rude and storm-vexed times require  
 A pilot formed by nature to command.  
 A peaceful nation I could render happy,

A wild rebellious people not subdue.

I never with the sword could open hearts  
Against me closed in hatred's cold reserve.

SOREL. The people's eye is dimm'd, an error blinds them,  
But this delusion will not long endure ;  
The day is not far distant, when the love,  
Deep rooted in the bosom of the French,  
Towards their native monarch will revive,  
Together with the ancient jealousy,  
Which forms a barrier 'twixt the hostile nations.  
The haughty foe precipitates his doom.  
Hence, with rash haste abandon not the field,  
With dauntless front contest each foot of ground,  
As thine own heart defend the town of Orleans !  
Let every boat be sunk beneath the wave,  
Each bridge be burned, sooner than carry thee  
Across the Loire, the bound'ry of thy realm,  
The Stygian flood, o'er which there's no return.

CHAS. . What could be done I have done, I have offer'd,  
In single fight, to combat for my crown.—  
I was refused. In vain my people bleed,  
In vain my towns are levell'd with the dust.  
Shall I, like that unnatural mother, see  
My child in pieces severed with the sword?  
No ; I forego my claim, that it may live.

DUNOIS. How, Sire ! Is this fit language for a king ?  
Is a crown thus renounced ? Thy meanest subject,  
For his opinion's sake, his hate and love,  
Sets property and life upon a cast ;  
When civil war hangs out her bloody flag  
Each private end is drowned in party zeal.  
The husbandman forsakes his plough, the wife  
Neglects her distaff ; children, and old men,  
Don the rude garb of war ; the citizen  
Consigns his town to the devouring flames,  
The peasant burns the produce of his fields ;  
And all to injure or advantage thee,  
And to achieve the purpose of his heart.  
Men show no mercy, and they wish for none,  
When they at honour's call maintain the fight,  
Or for their idols or their gods contend.  
A truce to such effeminate pity, then,

Which is not suited to a monarch's breast.  
 —Thou didst not heedlessly provoke the war;  
 As it commenced, so let it spend its fury.  
 It is the law of destiny that nations  
 Should for their monarchs immolate themselves.  
 We Frenchmen recognise this sacred law,  
 Nor would annul it. Base, indeed, the nation,  
 That for its honour ventures not its all.

CHARLES (*to the SENATORS*).

You've heard my last resolve—expect no other.  
 May God protect you! I can do no more.

DUNOIS. As thou dost turn thy back upon thy realm,  
 So may the God of battle aye avert  
 His visage from thee—Thou forsak'st thyself,  
 So I forsake thee. Not the power combined  
 Of England and rebellious Burgundy  
 Thy own mean spirit hurl thee from the throne.  
 Born heroes ever were the kings of France;  
 Thou wert a craven even from thy birth.

[*To the SENATORS.*]

The King abandons you. But I will throw  
 Myself into your town—my father's town—  
 And 'neath its ruins find a soldier's grave.

[*He is about to depart—AGNES SOREL detains him.*]

SOREL (*to the KING*).

Oh let him not depart in anger from thee!  
 Harsh words his lips have utter'd, but his heart  
 Is true as gold. 'Tis he, himself, my King,  
 Who loves thee, and hath often bled for thee.  
 Dunois! confess, the heat of noble wrath  
 Made thee forget thyself—and oh, do thou  
 Forgive a faithful friend's o'erhasty speech!  
 Come! let me quickly reconcile your hearts,  
 Ere anger bursteth forth in quenchless flame!

[*DUNOIS looks fixedly at the KING, and appears to await an answer.*]

CHAS. . Our way lies over the Loire. Du Châtel!  
 See all our equipage embarked.

DUNOIS (*quickly to SOREL*). Farewell!

[*He turns quickly round, and goes out.—The SENATORS follow.*]

SOREL (*wringing her hands in despair*).

O, if he goes, we are forsaken quite!

—Follow, La Hire! O seek to soften him!

[LA HIRE *goes out*.

SCENE VI.

CHARLES, SOREL, DU CHATEL.

CHAS. . Is, then, the sceptre such a peerless treasure?

Is it so hard to loose it from our grasp?

Believe me, 'tis more galling to endure

The domineering rule of these proud vassals.

To be dependent on their will and pleasure

Is, to a noble heart, more bitter far

Than to submit to fate.

[To DU CHATEL, *who still lingers*.

Du Châtel, go,

And do what I commanded!

DU CHATEL (*throws himself at the KING's feet*).

Oh, my King!

CHAS. . No more! Thou'st heard my absolute resolve!

CHATEL. Sire! with the Duke of Burgundy make peace!

'Tis the sole outlet from destruction left!

CHAS. . Thou giv'st this counsel, and thy blood alone

Can ratify this peace?

DU CHATEL Here is my head.

I oft have risked it for thee in the fight,

And with a joyful spirit I, for thee,

Would lay it down upon the block of death.

Conciliate the Duke! Deliver me

To the full measure of his wrath, and let

My flowing blood appease the ancient hate!

CHARLES (*looks at him for some time in silence, and with deep emotion*).

Can it be true? Am I, then, sunk so low,

That even friends, who read my inmost heart,

Point out, for my escape, the path of shame?

Yes, now I recognise my abject fall.

My honour is no more confided in.

CHATEL. Reflect—

CHARLES. Be silent, and incense me not!

Had I ten realms, on which to turn my back,



With my friend's life I would not purchase them.  
 —Do what I have commanded. Hence, and see  
 My equipage embarked.

DU CHATEL.

"Twill speedily

Be done.

[*He stands up and retires.*—AGNES SOREL weeps passionately.]

#### SCENE VII.

*The Royal Palace at Chinon.*

CHARLES, AGNES SOREL.

CHARLES (*seizing the hand of AGNES*).

My Agnes, be not sorrowful!

Beyond the Loire we still shall find a France;  
 We are departing to a happier land,  
 Where laughs a milder, an unclouded sky,  
 And gales more genial blow; we there shall meet  
 More gentle manners; song abideth there,  
 And love and life in richer beauty bloom.

SOREL. Oh, must I contemplate this day of woe!  
 The King must roam in banishment! the son  
 Depart, an exile from his father's house,  
 And turn his back upon his childhood's home!  
 O pleasant, happy land, that we forsake,  
 Ne'er shall we tread thee joyously again!

#### SCENE VIII.

LA HIRE *returns*. CHARLES, SOREL.

SOREL. You come alone? You do not bring him back?

[*Observing him more closely.*]

La Hire! What news? What does that look announce?  
 Some new calamity?

LA HIRE.

Calamity

Hath spent itself; sunshine is now return'd.

SOREL. What is it? I implore you.

LA HIRE (*to the KING*).

Summon back

The delegates from Orleans!

CHARLES.

Why? What is it?

HIRE. . Summon them back! Thy fortune is reversed.

A battle has been fought, and thou hast conquer'd.

SOREL. Conquer'd! O heavenly music of that word!

CHAS. . La Hire! A fabulous report deceives thee:

Conquer'd!—In conquest I believe no more

HIRE. . Still greater wonders thou wilt soon believe.

—Here cometh the Archbishop. To thine arms

He leadeth back Dunois.—

SOREL. O beauteous flower

Of victory, which doth the heavenly fruits

Of peace and reconciliation bear at once!

### SCENE IX.

*The same, ARCHBISHOP OF RHEIMS, DUNOIS, DU CHATEL, with  
RAOUL, a Knight in armour.*

ARCHBISHOP (*leading DUNOIS to the KING, and joining their  
hands*).

Princes, embrace! Let rage and discord cease,  
Since Heaven itself hath for our cause declared.

[DUNOIS embraces the KING.]

CHAS. . Relieve my wonder and perplexity.

What may this solemn earnestness portend?

Whence this unlook'd for change of fortune?

ARCHBISHOP (*leads the Knight forward, and presents him to  
the KING*). Speal!

RAOUL. We had assembled sixteen regiments  
Of Lotharingian troops, to join your host;  
And Baudricourt, a Knight of Vaucouleurs,  
Was our commander. Having gain'd the heights  
By Vermanton, we wound our downward way  
Into the valley water'd by the Yonne;  
There, in the plain before us, lay the foe,  
And when we turn'd, arms glitter'd in our rear.  
We saw ourselves surrounded by two hosts,  
And could not hope for conquest or for flight  
Then sank the bravest heart, and in despair  
We all prepared to lay our weapons down.  
The leaders with each other anxiously  
Sought counsel and found none,—when to our eyes  
A spectacle of wonder show'd itself!  
For suddenly from forth the thickets' depths

A maiden, on her head a polish'd helm,  
 Like a war-goddess, issued; terrible  
 Yet lovely was her aspect, and her hair  
 In dusky ringlets round her shoulders fell.  
 A heavenly radiance shone around the height;  
 When she upraised her voice and thus address'd us:  
 "Why be dismay'd, brave Frenchmen? On the foe!  
 Were they more numerous than the ocean sands,  
 God and the holy Maiden lead you on!"  
 Then quickly from the standard-bearer's hand  
 She snatch'd the banner, and before our troop  
 With valiant bearing strode the wond'rous maid.  
 Silent with awe, scarce knowing what we did,  
 The banner and the Maiden we pursue,  
 And fired with ardour, rush upon the foe,  
 Who, much amazed, stand motionless and view  
 The miracle with fix'd and wondering gaze.—  
 Then, as if seized by terror sent from God,  
 They suddenly betake themselves to flight,  
 And casting arms and armour to the ground,  
 Disperse in wild disorder o'er the field.  
 No leader's call, no signal now avails;  
 Senseless from terror, without looking back,  
 Horses and men plunge headlong in the stream,  
 Where they without resistance are despatch'd.  
 It was a slaughter rather than a fight!  
 Two thousand of the foe bestrew'd the field,  
 Not reckoning numbers swallow'd by the flood,  
 While of our company not one was slain.  
 CHAS. 'Tis strange, by Heaven! most wonderful and strange!  
 SOREL. A maiden work'd this miracle, you say?  
 Whence did she come? Who is she?

RAOUL.

Who she is

She will reveal to no one but the King!  
 She calls herself a seer and prophetess  
 Ordain'd by God, and promises to raise  
 The siege of Orleans ere the moon shall change.  
 The people credit her, and thirst for war.  
 The host she follows—she'll be here anon.

*[The ringing of bells is heard, together with the  
 clang of arms.]*

Hark to the din! The pealing of the bells!  
'Tis she! The people greet God's messenger.

CHARLES (*to DU CHATEL*).

Conduct her hither.— [*To the ARCHBISHOP.*  
What should I believe?

A maiden brings me conquest even now,  
When nought can save me but a hand divine!  
This is not in the common course of things.  
And dare I here believe a miracle?

MANY VOICES (*behind the scene*).

Hail to the Maiden!—the deliverer!

CHAS. . She comes! Dunois, now occupy my place!

We will make trial of this wond'rous maid.

Is she indeed inspired and sent by God.

She will be able to discern the King.

[*DUNOIS seats himself; the KING stands at his right hand, AGNES SOREL near him; the ARCHBISHOP and the others opposite; so that the intermediate space remains vacant*

#### SCENE X.

*The same. JOHANNA, accompanied by the Councillors and many Knights, who occupy the background of the scene; she advances with noble bearing, and slowly surveys the company.*

DUNOIS (*after a long and solemn pause*).

Art thou the wond'rous Maiden—

JOHANNA (*interrupts him, regarding him with dignity*).

Bastard of Orleans, thou wilt tempt thy God!

This place abandon, which becomes thee not!

To this more mighty one the Maid is sent.

[*With a firm step she approaches the KING, bows one knee before him, and, rising immediately, steps back. All present express their astonishment, DUNOIS forsakes his seat, which is occupied by the KING.*

CHAS. . Maiden, thou ne'er hast seen my face before.

Whence hast thou then this knowledge?

JOHANNA.

Thee I saw

When none beside, save God in heaven, beheld thee  
[*She approaches the KING and speaks mysteriously.*  
Bethink thee, Dauphin, in the bygone night!  
When all around lay buried in deep sleep,  
Thou from thy couch didst rise and offer up  
An earnest prayer to God. Let these retire  
And I will name the subject of thy prayer.

CHAS. . What I to Heaven confided need not be  
From men conceal'd. Disclose to me my prayer,  
And I shall doubt no more that God inspires thee  
JOHAN. Three prayers thou offer'dst, Dauphin; listen now  
Whether I name them to thee! Thou didst pray  
That if there were appended to this crown  
Unjust possession, or if heavy guilt,  
Not yet atoned for, from thy father's times,  
Occasion'd this most lamentable war,  
God would accept thee as a sacrifice,  
Have mercy on thy people, and pour forth  
Upon thy head the chalice of his wrath.

CHARLES (*steps back with awe*).  
Who art thou, mighty one? Whence comest thou?  
[*All express their astonishment*

JOHAN. To God thou offeredst this second prayer:  
That if it were His will and high decree  
To take away the sceptre from thy race,  
And from thee to withdraw whate'er thy sires,  
The monarchs of this kingdom, once possess'd,  
He in his mercy would preserve to thee  
Three priceless treasures—a contented heart,  
Thy friend's affection, and thine Agnes' love.

[*The KING conceals his face: the spectators express their astonishment.—After a pause,*

Thy third petition shall I name to thee?

CHAS. . Enough—I credit thee! This doth surpass  
Mere human knowledge: thou art sent by God!

ARCHB. Who art thou, wonderful and holy maid?  
What favour'd region bore thee? What blest pair,  
Belov'd of Heaven, may claim thee as their child?

JOHAN. Most reverend father, I am nam'd Johanna,  
I am a shepherd's lowly daughter, born  
In Dom Remi, a village of my King.

Included in the diocese of Toul,  
And from a child I kept my father's sheep.  
—And much and frequently I heard them tell  
Of the strange islanders, who o'er the sea  
Had come to make us slaves, and on us force  
A foreign lord, who loveth not the people;  
How the great city, Paris, they had seized,  
And had usurp'd dominion o'er the realm.  
'Then earnestly God's Mother I implor'd  
To save us from the shame of foreign chains,  
And to preserve to us our lawful King.  
Not distant from my native village stands  
An ancient image of the Virgin blest,  
To which the pious pilgrims oft repair'd;  
Hard by a holy oak, of blessed power,  
Standeth, far-fam'd through wonders manifold.  
Beneath the oak's broad shade I lov'd to sit,  
Tending my flock—my heart still drew me there.  
And if by chance among the desert hills  
A lambkin strayed, 'twas shown me in a dream,  
When in the shadow of this oak I slept.  
—And once, when through the night beneath this tree  
In pious adoration I had sat,  
Resisting sleep, the Holy One appear'd,  
Bearing a sword and banner, otherwise  
Clad like a shepherdess, and thus she spake:—  
“ 'Tis I; arise, Johanna! leave thy flock.  
The Lord appoints thee to another task!  
Receive this banner! Gird thee with this sword!  
Therewith exterminate my people's foes;  
Conduct to Rheims thy royal master's son,  
And crown him with the kingly diadem!”  
And I made answer: “ How may I presume  
To undertake such deeds, a tender maid,  
Unpractis'd in the dreadful art of war!”  
And she replied: “ A maiden pure and chaste  
Achieves whate'er on earth is glorious,  
If she to earthly love ne'er yields her heart.  
Look upon me! a virgin, like thyself;  
I to the Christ, the Lord divine, gave birth,  
And am myself divine!”—Mine eyelids then

She touch'd, and when I upward turn'd my gaze,  
 Heaven's wide expanse was fill'd with angel-boys,  
 Who bore white lilies in their hands, while tones  
 Of sweetest music floated through the air.  
 —And thus on three successive nights appear'd  
 The Holy One, and cried—" Arise, Johanna!  
 The Lord appoints thee to another task!"  
 And when the third night she reveal'd herself,  
 Wrathful she seem'd, and chiding spake these words:  
 " Obedience, woman's duty here on earth;  
 Severe endurance is her heavy doom;  
 She must be purified through discipline;  
 Who serveth here, is glorified above!"  
 While thus she spake, she let her shepherd garb  
 Fall from her, and as Queen of Heaven stood forth,  
 Enshrined in radiant light, while golden clouds  
 Upbore her slowly to the realms of bliss.

[*All are moved ; AGNES SOREL weeping, hides her  
 face on the bosom of the KING.*]

ARCHBISHOP (*after a long pause*).

Before divine credentials such as these  
 Each doubt of earthly prudence must subside.  
 Her deeds attest the truth of what she speaks,  
 For God alone such wonders can achieve.

DUNOIS. I credit not her wonders, but her eyes,  
 Which beam with innocence and purity.

CHAS. . Am I, a sinner, worthy of such favour?  
 Infallible, All-searching eye, thou seest  
 Mine inmost heart, my deep humility!

JOHAN. Humility shines brightly in the skies;  
 Thou art abased, hence God exalteth thee.

CHAS. . Shall I indeed withstand mine enemies?

JOHAN. France I will lay submissive at thy feet!

CHAS. . And Orleans, say'st thou, will not be surrender'd?

JOHAN. The Loire shall sooner roll its waters back.

CHAS. . Shall I in triumph enter into Rheims?

JOHAN. I through ten thousand foes will lead thee there.

[*The knights make a noise with their lances and  
 shields, and evince signs of courage.*]

DUNOIS. Appoint the Maiden to command the host!

We follow blindly wheresoe'er she leads !  
The holy one's prophetic eye shall guide,  
And this brave sword from danger shall protect her !

HIRE. . A universe in arms we will not fear,  
If she, the mighty one, precede our troops.  
The God of battle walketh by her side ;  
Let her conduct us on to victory !

*[The Knights clang their arms and press forward.]*

CHAS. . Yes, holy Maiden, do thou lead mine host ;  
My chiefs and warriors shall submit to thee.  
This sword of matchless temper, proved in war,  
Sent back in anger by the Constable,  
Hath found a hand more worthy. Prophetess,  
Do thou receive it, and henceforward be—

JOHAN. No, noble Dauphin ! conquest to my Liege  
Is not accorded through this instrument  
Of earthly might. I know another sword  
Wherewith I am to conquer, which to thee,  
I, as the Spirit taught, will indicate ;  
Let it be hither brought.

CHARLES. Name it, Johanna.

JOHAN. Send to the ancient town of Fierbois ;  
There in Saint Catherine's churchyard is a vault  
Where lie in heaps the spoils of bygone war.  
Among them is the sword, which I must use.  
It, by three golden lilies may be known,  
Upon the blade impress'd. Let it be brought,  
For thou, my Liege, shalt conquer through this sword.

CHAS. Perform what she commands.

JOHANNA. And a white banner,  
Edg'd with a purple border, let me bear.  
Upon this banner let the Queen of Heaven  
Be pictur'd, with the beauteous Jesus child,  
Floating in glory o'er this earthly ball.  
For so the Holy Mother show'd it me.

CHAS. . So be it as thou sayest.

JOHANNA *(to the ARCHBISHOP)*. Reverend Bishop :  
Lay on my head thy consecrated hands !  
Pronounce a blessing, Father, on thy child !

*[She kneels down.]*



ARCH. . Not blessings to receive, but to dispense  
 Art thou appointed.—Go, with power divine!  
 But we are sinners all and most unworthy.

[*She rises: a PAGE enters.*]

PAGE. . A herald from the English generals.

JOHAN. Let him appear, for he is sent by God!

[*The KING motions to the PAGE, who retires.*]

# SCENE XI.

*The HERALD. The same.*

CHAS. . Thy tidings, Herald? What thy message? Speak!

HER. . Who is it, who for Charles of Valois,  
 The Count of Ponthieu, in this presence speaks?

DUNOIS. Unworthy Herald! base, insulting knave!  
 Dost thou presume the Monarch of the French  
 Thus in his own dominions to deny?  
 Thou art protected by thine office, else—

HER. . One king alone is recognised by France,  
 And he resideth in the English camp.

CHAS. . Peace, peace, good cousin! Speak thy message, Herald!

HER. . My noble general laments the blood  
 Which hath already flow'd, and still must flow  
 Hence, in the scabbard holding back the sword,  
 Before by storm the town of Orleans falls,  
 He offers thee an amicable treaty.

CHAS. . Proceed!

JOHANNA (*stepping forward*).

Permit me, Dauphin, in thy stead,  
 To parley with this herald.

CHARLES. Do so, Maid!  
 Determine thou, for peace, or bloody war.

JOHANNA (*to the HERALD*).

Whosendeth thee? Who speaketh through thy mouth?

HER. . The Earl of Salisbury; the British chief.

JOHAN. Herald, 'tis false! The earl speaks not through thee.  
 Only the living speak, the dead are silent.

HER. . The earl is well, and full of lusty strength;  
 He lives to bring down ruin on your heads.

JOHAN. When thou didst quit the British camp, he lived.  
 This morn, while gazing from Le Tournelle's tower,  
 A ball from Orleans struck him to the ground.

—Smil'st thou, that I discern what is remote?  
 Not to my words give credence ; but believe  
 The witness of thine eyes ! his funeral train  
 Thou shalt encounter as thou goest hence !  
 Now, Herald, speak, and do thine errand here.

HER. If what is hidden thou canst thus reveal,  
 Thou know'st mine errand ere I tell it thee.

JOHAN. It boots me not to know it. But do thou  
 Give ear unto my words ! This message bear  
 In answer to the lords who sent thee here.  
 —Monarch of England, and ye haughty dukes,  
 Bedford and Gloucester, regents of this realm !  
 To Heaven's high King ye are accountable  
 For all the blood that hath been shed ! Restore  
 The keys of all the cities ta'en by force,  
 In opposition to God's holy law !  
 The Maiden cometh from the King of Heaven  
 And offers you or peace, or bloody war.  
 Choose ye ! for this I say, that ye may know it :  
 To you this beauteous realm is not assign'd  
 By Mary's Son ;—but God hath given it  
 To Charles, my lord and Dauphin, who ere long  
 Will enter Paris with a monarch's pomp,  
 Attended by the great ones of his realm.  
 —Now, Herald, go, and speedily depart,  
 For ere thou canst attain the British camp  
 And do thine errand, is the Maiden there,  
 To plant the sign of victory at Orleans.

[*She retires. In the midst of a general movement, the curtain falls.*

## ACT II.

*Landscape, bounded by Rocks.*

### SCENE I.

TALBOT and LIONEL, *English Generals*. PHILIP, DUKE OF BURGUNDY, FASTOLFE, and CHATILLON, *with Soldiers and Banners*.

TALBOT. Here let us make a halt, beneath these rocks,  
 And pitch our camp, in case our scatter'd troops,  
 Dispers'd in panic fear, again should rally.

Choose trusty sentinels, and guard the heights!  
'Tis true the darkness shields us from pursuit,  
And sure I am, unless the foe have wings,  
We need not fear surprisal.—Still 'tis well  
To practise caution, for we have to do  
With a bold foe, and have sustain'd defeat.

[FASTOLFE goes out with the soldiers.]

LIONEL. Defeat! My general, do not speak that word.  
It stings me to the quick to think the French  
To-day have seen the backs of Englishmen.  
—O, Orleans! Orleans! Grave of England's glory!  
Our honour lies upon thy fatal plains.

Defeat most ignominious and burlesque!  
Who will in future years believe the tale!  
The victors of Poitiers and Agincourt,  
Cressy's bold heroes, routed by a woman?

BURG. . That must console us. Not by mortal power,  
But by the devil, have we been o'erthrown!

TALBOT. The devil of our own stupidity!  
—How, Burgundy? Do princes quake and fear  
Before the phantom which appals the vulgar?  
Credulity is but a sorry cloak

For cowardice—Your people first took flight.

BURG. None stood their ground. The flight was general.

TALBOT. 'Tis false! Your wing fled first. You wildly broke  
Into our camp, exclaiming: "Hell is loose,  
The devil combats on the side of France!"

And thus you brought confusion 'mong our troops

LIONEL. You can't deny it. Your wing yielded first.

BURG. . Because the brunt of battle there commenced.

TALBOT. The Maiden knew the weakness of our camp;  
She rightly judged where fear was to be found.

BURG. . How? Shall the blame of our disaster rest  
With Burgundy?

LIONEL. By Heav'n! were we alone,  
We English, never had we Orleans lost!

BURG. . No, truly!—for ye ne'er had Orleans seen!  
Who opened you a way into this realm,  
And reached you forth a kind and friendly hand,  
When you descended on this hostile coast?

Who was it crowned your Henry at Paris,  
 And unto him subdued the people's hearts?  
 Had this Burgundian arm not guided you  
 Into this realm, by Heaven ye ne'er had seen  
 The smoke ascending from a single hearth!

LIONEL. Were conquests with big words effected, Duke,  
 You, doubtless, would have conquered France alone.

BURG. . The loss of Orleans angers you, and now  
 You vent your gall on me, your friend and ally.  
 What lost us Orleans, but your avarice?  
 The city was prepared to yield to me,  
 Your envy was the sole impediment.

TALBOT. We did not undertake the siege for you.

BURG. . How would it stand with you, if I withdrew  
 With all my host?

LIONEL. We should not be worse off,  
 'Than when, at Agincourt, we prov'd a match  
 For you, and all the banded power of France.

BURG. . Yet much ye stood in need of our alliance,  
 The regent purchased it at heavy cost.

TALBOT. Most dearly, with the forfeit of our honour,  
 At Orleans, have we paid for it to-day.

BURG. . Urge me no further, Lords. Ye may repent it!  
 Did I forsake the banners of my King,  
 Draw down upon my head the traitor's name,  
 To be insulted thus by foreigners?  
 Why am I here to combat against France?  
 If I must needs endure ingratitude,  
 Let it come rather from my native King!

TALBOT. You're in communication with the Dauphin,  
 We know it well, but we shall soon find means  
 To guard ourselves 'gainst treason.

BURGUNDY. Death and Hell!  
 Am I encounter'd thus?—Chatillon, hark!  
 Let all my troops prepare to quit the camp.  
 We will retire into our own domain.

[CHATILLON goes out]

LIONEL. God speed you there! Never did Britain's fame  
 More brightly shine, than when she stood alone,  
 Confiding solely in her own good sword.

Let each one fight his battle for himself,  
For 'tis eternal truth, that English blood  
Cannot, with honour, blend with blood of France.

## SCENE II.

*The same.* QUEEN ISABEL, attended by a Page.

ISABEL. What must I hear? This fatal strife forbear!  
What brain-bewildering planet o'er your minds  
Sheds dire perplexity? When unity  
Alone can save you, will you part in hate,  
And, warring 'mong yourselves, prepare your doom?  
—I do entreat you, noble Duke, recall  
Your hasty order. You, renowned Talbot,  
Seek to appease an irritated friend!  
Come, Lionel, aid me to reconcile  
These haughty spirits, and establish peace.

LIONEL. Not I, Madame. It is all one to me.

'Tis my belief, when things are misallied,  
The sooner they part company the better.

ISABEL. How? Do the arts of hell, which on the field  
Wrought such disastrous ruin, even here  
Bewilder and befool us? Who began  
This fatal quarrel? Speak!—Lord General!  
Your own advantage did you so forget,  
As to offend your worthy friend and ally?  
What could you do without his powerful arm?  
'Twas he who placed your Monarch on the throne,  
He holds him there, and he can hurl him thence;  
His army strengthens you—still more his name.  
Were England all her citizens to pour  
Upon our coasts, she never o'er this realm  
Would gain dominion, did she stand alone;  
No! France can only be subdued by France!

TALBOT. A faithful friend we honour as we ought;  
Discretion warns us to beware the false. -

BURG. . The liar's brazen front beseemeth him  
Who would absolve himself from gratitude.

ISABEL. How, noble Duke? Could you so far renounce  
Your princely honour, and your sense of shame,  
As clasp the hand of him who slew your sire?  
Are you so mad to entertain the thought

Of cordial reconciliation with the Dauphin,  
Whom you, yourself, have hurl'd to ruin's brink?  
His overthrow you have well nigh achieved,  
And madly now would you renounce your work?  
Here stand your allies. Your salvation lies  
In an indissoluble bond with England.

BURG. . Far is my thought from treaty with the Dauphin;  
But the contempt and insolent demeanour  
Of haughty England I will not endure.

ISABEL. Come, noble Duke! Excuse a hasty word.  
Heavy the grief which bows the general down,  
And well you know, misfortune makes unjust.  
Come! come! embrace; let me this fatal breach  
Repair at once, ere it becomes eternal.

TALBOT. What think you, Burgundy? A noble heart,  
By reason vanquish'd, doth confess its fault.  
A wise and prudent word the Queen hath spoken;  
Come, let my hand, with friendly pressure, heal  
The wound inflicted by my angry tongue.

BURG. . Discreet the counsel offered by the Queen!  
My just wrath yieldeth to necessity.

ISABEL. 'Tis well! Now, with a brotherly embrace,  
Confirm and seal the new-established bond;  
And may the winds disperse what hath been spoken.

[BURGUNDY and TALBOT embrace.]

LIONEL (*contemplating the group aside*).

Hail to an union by the Furies planned!

ISABEL. Fate hath proved adverse, we have lost a battle,  
But do not, therefore, let your courage sink.  
The Dauphin, in despair of heavenly aid,  
Doth make alliance with the powers of Hell;  
Vainly his soul he forfeits to the Devil,  
For Hell itself cannot deliver him.  
A conquering maiden leads the hostile force;  
Yours, I, myself, will lead; to you I'll stand  
In place of maiden or of prophetess.

LIONEL. Madame, return to Paris! We desire  
To war with trusty weapons, not with women.

TALBOT. Go! go! Since your arrival in the camp,  
Fortune hath fled our banners, and our course  
Hath still been retrograde

BURGUNDY.

Depart at once!

Your presence here doth scandalize the host.

ISABEL (*looks from one to the other with astonishment*).

This, Burgundy, from you? Do you take part  
Against me with these thankless English lords?

BURG. . Go! go! The thought of combating for you  
Unnerves the courage of the bravest men.

ISABEL. I scarce among you have establish'd peace,  
And you already form a league against me!

TALBOT. Go, in God's name. When you have left the camp,  
No devil will again appal our troops,

ISABEL. Say am I not your true confederate?  
Arc we not banded in a common cause?

TALBOT. Thank God! your cause of quarrel is not ours.  
We combat in an honourable strife.

BURG. . A father's bloody murder I avenge;  
Stern filial duty consecrates my arms.

TALBOT. Confess at once! Your conduct towards the Dauphin  
Is an offence alike to God and man.

ISABEL. Curses blast him and his posterity!  
The shameless son who sins against his mother!

BURG. . Ay! to avenge a husband and a father!

ISABEL. To judge his mother's conduct he presumed!

LIONEL. That was, indeed, irreverent in a son!

ISABEL. And me, forsooth, he banish'd from the realm!

TALBOT. Urged to the measure by the public voice.

ISABEL. A curse light on him if I e'er forgive him!  
Rather than see him on his father's throne—

TALBOT. His mother's honour you would sacrifice!

ISABEL. Your feeble natures cannot comprehend  
The vengeance of an outrag'd mother's heart.  
Who pleasures me, I love; who wrongs, I hate.  
If he who wrongs me chance to be my son,  
All the more worthy is he of my hate.  
The life I gave, I will again take back  
From him who doth, with ruthless violence,  
The bosom rend which bore and nourish'd him.  
Ye, who do thus make war upon the Dauphin,  
What rightful cause have ye to plunder him?  
What crime hath he committed against you?  
What insult are you call'd on to avenge?

Ambition, paltry envy, goad you on ;  
I have a right to hate him—he's my son.

TALBOT. He feels his mother in her dire revenge !

ISABEL. Mean hypocrites ! I hate you and despise.

Together with the world, you cheat yourselves !

With robber-hands you English seek to clutch

This realm of France, where you have no just right,

Nor equitable claim, to so much earth

As could be cover'd by your charger's hoof.

—This Duke, too, whom the people style The Good,

Doth to a foreign lord, his country's foe,

For gold betray the birthland of his sires.

And yet is justice ever on your tongue.

—Hypocrisy I scorn. Such as I am,

So let the world behold me !

BURGUNDY.

It is true !

Your reputation you have well maintain'd.

ISABEL. I've passions and warm blood. and as a queen

Came to this realm to live, and not to seem.

Should I have lingered out a joyless life

Because the curse of adverse destiny

To a mad consort join'd my blooming youth ?

More than my life I prize my liberty.

And who assails me here—But why should I

Stoop to dispute with you about my rights ?

Your sluggish blood flows slowly in your veins !

Strangers to pleasure, ye know only rage !

This duke too—who, throughout his whole career,

Hath waver'd to and fro, 'twixt good and ill—

Can neither hate nor love with his whole heart.

—I go to Melun. Let this gentleman,

[*Pointing to LIONEL.*

Who doth my fancy please, attend me there,

To cheer my solitude, and you may work

Your own good pleasure ! I'll inquire no more

Concerning the Burgundians or the English.

[*She beckons to her PAGE, and is about to retire.*

LIONEL. Rely upon us, we will send to Melun

The fairest youths whom we in battle take.

[*Coming back.*



ISABEL. Skilful your arm to wield the sword of death,  
The French alone can round the polish'd phrase.  
[*She goes out.*]

## SCENE III.

TALBOT, BURGUNDY, LIONEL.

TALBOT. Heavens! What a woman!

LIONEL. Now, brave generals,

Your counsel! Shall we prosecute our flight,  
Or turn, and with a bold and sudden stroke  
Wipe out the foul dishonour of to-day?

BURG. . We are too weak, our soldiers are dispersed,  
The recent terror still unnerves the host.

TALBOT Blind terror, sudden impulse of a moment,  
Alone occasioned our disastrous rout.  
This phantom of the terror-stricken brain,  
More closely view'd, will vanish into air.  
My counsel, therefore, is, at break of day,  
To lead the army back, across the stream,  
To meet the enemy.

BURGUNDY. Consider well—

LIONEL. Your pardon! Here is nothing to consider.  
What we have lost we must at once retrieve,  
Or look to be eternally disgraced.

TALBOT. It is resolved. To-morrow morn we fight,  
This dread-inspiring phantom to destroy,  
Which thus doth blind and terrify the host.  
Let us in fight encounter this she-devil.  
If she oppose her person to our sword,  
Trust me, she never will molest me more;  
If she avoid our stroke—and be assured  
She will not stand the hazard of a battle—  
Then is the dire enchantment at an end!

LIONEL. So be it! And to me, my general, leave  
This easy, bloodless combat, for I hope  
Alive to take this ghost, and in my arms,  
Before the Bastard's eyes—her paramour—  
To bear her over to the English camp,  
To be the sport and mockery of the host.

BURG. . Make not too sure

TALBOT. If she encounter me,

I shall not give her such a soft embrace.  
Come now, exhausted nature to restore  
Through gentle sleep. At daybreak we set forth.  
[*They go out.*]

## SCENE IV.

JOHANNA, *with her banner, in a helmet and breast-plate, otherwise attired as a woman.* DUNOIS, LA HIRE, *Knights, and Soldiers, appear above upon the rocky path, pass silently over, and appear immediately after on the scene.*

JOHANNA (*to the Knights, who surround her, while the procession continues above*).

The wall is scaled, and we are in the camp!  
Now fling aside the mantle of still night,  
Which hitherto hath veil'd your silent march,  
And your dread presence to the foe proclaim  
By your loud battle cry—God and the Maiden!

ALL (*exclaim aloud, amidst the loud clang of arms*).

God and the Maiden! [Drums and trumpets.

SENTINELS (*behind the scene*). The foe! The foe! The foe!

JOHAN. Ho! torches here! Hurl fire into the tents!  
Let the devouring flames augment the horror,  
While threatening death doth compass them around!  
[Soldiers hasten on, she is about to follow.

DUNOIS (*holding her back*).

Thy part thou hast accomplish'd now, Johanna!  
Into the camp thou hast conducted us.  
The foe thou hast deliver'd in our hands.  
Now from the rush of war remain apart!  
The bloody consummation leave to us.

HIRE. . Point out the path of conquest to the host;  
Before us, in pure hand, the banner bear,  
But wield the fatal weapon not thyself;  
Tempt not the treacherous god of battle, for  
He rageth blindly, and he spareth not.

JOHAN. Who dares impede my progress? Who presume  
The Spirit to control, which guideth me?  
Still must the arrow wing its destin'd flight!  
Where danger is, there must Johanna be;  
Nor now, nor here, am I foredoom'd to fall;

Our Monarch's royal brow I first must see  
Invested with the round of sovereignty.  
No hostile power can rob me of my life,  
Till I've accomplish'd the commands of God.

[*She goes out.*

HIRE. . Come, let us follow after her, Dunois,  
And let our valiant bosoms be her shield! [*Exit.*

### SCENE V

ENGLISH SOLDIERS *hurry over the stage. Afterwards* TALBOT

1 SOL. . The Maiden in the camp!

2 SOLDIER. Impossible!

It cannot be! How came she in the camp?

3 SOL. . Why through the air! The devil aided her!

4 AND 5 SOLDIERS.

Fly! fly! We are dead men!

TALBOT (*enters*).

They heed me not!—They stay not at my call!

The sacred bands of discipline are loosed!

As Hell had poured her damned legions forth,

A wild distracting impulse whirls along,

In one mad throng, the cowardly and brave.

I cannot rally e'en the smallest troop

To form a bulwark 'gainst the hostile flood,

Whose raging billows press into our camp!

—Do I alone retain my sober senses,

While all around in wild delirium rave?

To fly before these weak degenerate Frenchmen

Whom we in twenty battles have o'erthrown?—

Who is she then—the irresistible—

The dread-inspiring goddess, who doth turn

At once the tide of battle, and transform

To lions bold, a herd of timid deer?

A juggling minx, who plays the well-learn'd part

Of heroine, thus to appal the brave?

A woman snatch from me all martial fame?

SOLDIER (*rushes in*).

The Maiden comes! Fly, general! fly! fly!

TALBOT (*strikes him down*).

Fly thou, thyself, to Hell! This sword shall pierce

Who talks to me of fear, or coward flight!

[*He goes out.*

## SCENE VI.

*The prospect opens. The English camp is seen in flames.*

*Drums, flight and pursuit. After a while, MONTGOMERY enters.*

MONTGOMERY (*alone*).

Where shall I flee? Foes all around and death! Lo!  
here

The furious general, who, with threatening sword,  
prevents

Escape, and drives us back into the jaws of death.

The dreadful Maiden there—the terrible—who, like

Devouring flame, destruction spreads; while all around

Appears no bush wherein to hide—no sheltering cave!

Oh, would that o'er the sea I never had come here!

Me miserable! Empty dreams deluded me—

Cheap glory to achieve on Gallia's martial fields;

And I am guided by malignant destiny

Into this murder's fight.—Oh, were I far, far hence,

Still in my peaceful home, on Severn's flowery banks,

Where in my father's house, in sorrow and in tears,

I left my mother and my fair young bride.

[JOHANNA *appears in the distance.*

Wo's me! What do I see! The dreadful form ap-  
pears!

Arrayed in lurid light, she from the raging fire

Issues, as from the jaws of hell, a midnight ghost.

Where shall I go?—where flee? Already from afar

She seizes on me with her eye of fire, and flings

Her fatal and unerring coil, whose magic folds

With ever-tightening pressure bind my feet, and  
make

Escape impossible! Howe'er my heart rebels,

I am compell'd to follow with my gaze that form

Of dread!

[JOHANNA *advances towards him some steps; and  
again remains standing.*

She comes! I will not passively await

Her furious onset! Imploringly I'll clasp

Her knees! I'll sue to her for life. She is a woman,

I may perchance to pity move her by my tears!

[*While he is on the point of approaching her, she  
draws near.*

## SCENE VII.

JOHANNA, MONTGOMERY.

JOHAN. Prepare to die! A British mother bore thee!

MONTGOMERY (*falls at her feet*).

Fall back, terrific one! Forbear to strike  
An unprotected foe! My sword and shield  
I've flung aside, ~~and~~ supplicating fall  
Defenceless at thy feet. A ransom take!  
Extinguish not the precious light of life!  
With fair possessions crown'd, my father dwells  
In Wales' fair land, where among verdant meads  
The winding Severn rolls his silver tide,  
And fifty villages confess his sway.  
With heavy gold he will redeem his son,  
When he shall hear I'm in the camp of France.

JOHAN. Deluded mortal! to destruction doomed!  
Thou'rt fallen in the Maiden's hand, from which  
Redemption or deliverance there is none.  
Had adverse fortune given thee a prey  
To the fierce tiger or the crocodile—  
Hadst robbed the lion-mother of her brood—  
Compassion thou mightst hope to find and pity;  
But to encounter me is certain death.  
For my dread compact with the spirit realm—  
The stern, inviolable—bindeth me,  
To slay each living thing whom battle's God,  
Full charged with doom, delivers to my sword.

MONT. . Thy speech is fearful, but thy look is mild;  
Not dreadful art thou to contemplate near;  
My heart is drawn towards thy lovely form.  
O! by the mildness of thy gentle sex,  
Attend my prayer. Compassionate my youth.

JOHAN. Name me not woman! Speak not of my sex!  
Like to the bodiless spirits, who know nought  
Of earth's humanities, I own no sex;  
Beneath this vest of steel there beats no heart.

MONT. . O! by Love's sacred all pervading power,  
To whom all hearts yield homage, I conjure thee.  
At home I left behind a gentle bride,  
Beauteous as thou, and rich in blooming grace;  
Weeping she waiteth her betrothed's return.

O! if thyself dost ever hope to love,  
If in thy love thou hopest to be happy,  
Then ruthless sever not two gentle hearts,  
Together linked in love's most holy bond!

JOHAN. Thou dost appeal to earthly, unknown gods,  
To whom I yield no homage. Of Love's bond,  
By which thou dost conjure me, I know nought,  
Nor ever will I know his empty service.  
Defend thy life, for death doth summon thee.

MONT. . Take pity on my sorrowing parents, whom  
I left at home. Doubtless thou, too, hast left  
Parents, who feel disquietude for thee.

JOHAN. Unhappy man! thou dost remember me  
How many mothers, of this land, your arms  
Have rendered childless and disconsolate;  
How many gentle children fatherless;  
How many fair young brides dejected widows!  
Let England's mothers now be taught despair,  
And learn to weep the bitter tear, oft shed  
By the bereav'd and sorrowing wives of France.

MONT. . 'Tis hard, in foreign lands to die unwept.

JOHAN. Who call'd you over to this foreign land,  
To waste the blooming culture of our fields,  
To chase the peasant from his household hearth,  
And in our cities' peaceful sanctuary  
To hurl the direful thunderbolt of war?  
In the delusion of your hearts ye thought  
To plunge in servitude the freeborn French,  
And to attach their fair and goodly realm,  
Like a small boat to your proud English bark!  
Ye fools! The royal arms of France are hung  
Fast by the throne of God; and ye as soon  
From the bright wain of heaven might snatch a star,  
As rend a single village from this realm,  
Which shall remain inviolate for ever!  
—The day of vengeance is at length arrived;  
Not living shall ye measure back the sea,  
The sacred sea—the boundary set by God  
Betwixt our hostile nations—and the which  
Ye ventur'd impiously to overpass.

MONTGOMERY (*lets go her hands*).

O, I must die! I feel the grasp of death!

JOHAN. Die, friend! Why tremble at the approach of death,  
Of mortals the irrevocable doom?  
Look upon me! I'm born a shepherd maid;  
This hand, accustom'd to the peaceful crook,  
Is all unused to wield the sword of death,  
Yet, snatch'd away from childhood's peaceful haunts,  
From the fond love of father and of sisters,  
Urged by no idle dream of earthly glory,  
But Heaven-appointed to achieve your ruin,  
Like a destroying angel I must roam,  
Spreading dire havoc round me, and at length  
Myself must fall a sacrifice to death!  
Never again shall I behold my home!  
Still many of your people I must slay,  
Still many widows make, but I at length  
Myself shall perish, and fulfil my doom.  
—Now thine fulfil. Arise! resume thy sword,  
And let us fight for the sweet prize of life.

MONTGOMERY (*stands up*).

Now, if thou art a mortal like myself,  
Can weapons wound thee, it may be assign'd  
To this good arm to end my country's wo,  
Thee scolding, sorceress, to the depths of Hell.  
In God's most gracious hands I leave my fate.  
Accursed one! to thine assistance call  
The fiends of Hell! Now combat for thy life!  
[*He seizes his sword and shield, and rushes upon her; martial music is heard in the distance.*  
—*After a short conflict MONTGOMERY falls.*

#### SCENE VIII.

JOHANNA (*alone*).

To death thy foot did bear thee—fare thee well!  
[*She steps away from him and remains absorbed in thought.*  
Virgin, thou workest mightily in me!  
My feeble arm thou dost endue with strength,  
And steep'st my woman's heart in cruelty.  
In pity melts the soul and the hand trembles,  
As it did violate some sacred fane,  
To mar the goodly person of the foe.

Once I did shudder at the polish'd sheath,  
 But when 'tis needed, I'm possess'd with strength,  
 And as it were itself a thing of life,  
 The fatal weapon, in my trembling grasp,  
 Self-swayed, inflicteth the unerring stroke.

## SCENE IX.

A KNIGHT *with closed visor*, JOHANNA.

KNIGHT. Accursed one! thy hour of death is come!  
 Long have I sought thee on the battle field,  
 Fatal delusion! get thee back to hell,  
 Whence thou didst issue forth.

JOHANNA. Say, who art thou,  
 Whom his bad genius sendeth in my way?  
 Princely thy port, no Briton dost thou seem,  
 For the Burgundian colours stripe thy shield,  
 Before the which my sword inclines its point.

KNIGHT. Vile castaway! Thou all unworthy art  
 To fall beneath a prince's noble hand.  
 The hangman's axe should thy accursed head  
 Cleave from thy trunk, unfit for such vile use  
 The royal duke of Burgundy's brave sword.

JOHAN. Art thou indeed that noble duke himself?

KNIGHT (*raises his visor*).  
 I'm he, vile creature, tremble and despair!  
 The arts of hell shall not protect thee more,  
 Thou hast till now weak dastards overcome;  
 Now thou dost meet a man.

## SCENE X.

DUNOIS and LA HIRE. *The same.*

DUNOIS. Hold, Burgundy!  
 Turn! combat now with men, and not with maids.  
 HIRE. . We will defend the holy prophetess;  
 First must thy weapon penetrate this breast.—  
 BURG. . I fear not this seducing Circe; no,  
 Nor you, whom she hath changed so shamefully!  
 Oh blush, Dunois! and do thou blush, La Hire!  
 To stoop thy valour to these hellish arts—  
 To be shield-bearer to a sorceress!



Come one—come all! He only who despairs  
Of Heaven's protection, seeks the aid of Hell.

*[They prepare for combat, JOHANNA steps between]*

JOHAN. Forbear!

BURGUNDY. Dost tremble for thy lover? Thus  
Before thine eyes he shall—

*[He makes a thrust at DUNOIS.]*

JOHANNA.

Dunois, forbear!

Part them, La Hire! no blood of France must flow:  
Not hostile weapons must this strife decide.  
Above the stars 'tis otherwise decreed.  
Fall back! I say—Attend and venerate  
The Spirit, which hath seized, which speaks through  
me!

DUNOIS. Why, Maiden, now hold back my upraised arm?  
Why check the just decision of the sword?  
My weapon pants to deal the fatal blow  
Which shall avenge and heal the woes of France.

*[She places herself in the midst and separates the parties.]*

JOHAN. Fall back, Dunois! Stand where thou art, La Hire!  
Somewhat I have to say to Burgundy.

*[When all is quiet.]*

What wouldst thou, Burgundy? Who is the foe  
Whom eagerly thy murderous glances seek?  
This prince is, like thyself, a son of France,—  
This hero is thy countryman, thy friend;  
I am a daughter of thy fatherland.  
We all, whom thou art eager to destroy,  
Are of thy friends;—our longing arms prepare  
To clasp, our bending knees to honour thee.—  
Our sword 'gainst thee is pointless, and that face  
E'en in a hostile helm is dear to us,  
For there we trace the features of our king.

BURG. . What, syren! wilt thou with seducing words  
Allure thy victim? Cunning sorceress,  
Me thou deludest not. Mine ears are closed  
Against thy treacherous words; and vainly dart  
Thy fiery glances 'gainst this mail of proof.

To arms. Dunois !

With weapons let us fight, and not with words.

DUNOIS. First words, then weapons, Burgundy !

With dread inspire thee ? 'Tis a coward's fear,  
And the betrayer of an evil cause.

JOHAN. 'Tis not imperious necessity

Which throws us at thy feet ! We do not come  
As suppliants before thee.—Look around !

The English tents are level with the ground,  
And all the field is cover'd with your slain.

Hark ! the war-trumpets of the French resound :  
God hath decided—ours the victory !

Our new-cull'd laurel garland with our friend

We fain would share.—Come, noble fugitive !

Oh come where justice and where victory dwell !

Even I, the messenger of Heaven, extend

A sister's hand to thee. I fain would save

And draw thee over to our righteous cause !

Heaven hath declared for France ! Angelic powers,

Unseen by thee, do battle for our King ;

With lilies are the holy ones adorn'd.

Pure as this radiant banner is our cause ;

Its blessed symbol is the Queen of Heaven.

BURG. . Falsehood's fallacious words are full of guile,

But hers are pure and simple as a child's.

If evil spirits borrow this disguise,

They copy innocence triumphantly.

I'll hear no more. To arms, Dunois ! to arms !

Mine ear, I feel, is weaker than mine arm.

JOHAN. You call me an enchantress, and accuse

Of hellish arts.—Is it the work of Hell

To heal dissension and to foster peace ?

Comes holy concord from the depths below ?

Say, what is holy, innocent, and good,

If not to combat for our fatherland ?

Since when hath nature been so self-opposed,

That Heaven forsakes the just and righteous cause,

While Hell protects it ? If my words are true,

Whence could I draw them but from Heaven above ?

Who ever sought me in my shepherd-walks,

To teach the humble maid affairs of state?  
I ne'er have stood with princes, to these lips  
Unknown the arts of eloquence. Yet now,  
When I have need of it to touch thy heart,  
Insight and varied knowledge I possess;  
The fate of empires and the doom of kings  
Lie clearly spread before my childish mind,  
And words of thunder issue from my mouth.

BURGUNDY (*greatly moved, looks at her with emotion and astonishment*).

How is it with me? Doth some heavenly power  
Thus strangely stir my spirit's inmost depths?  
—'This pure, this gentle creature cannot lie!  
No, if enchantment blinds me, 'tis from Heaven:  
My spirit tells me she is sent from God.

JOHAN. Oh he is mov'd! I have not pray'd in vain,  
Wrath's thundercloud dissolves in gentle tears,  
And leaves his brow, while mercy's golden beams  
Break from his eyes and gently promise peace.  
—Away with arms, now clasp him to your hearts,  
He weeps—he's conquer'd he is ours once more!

[*Her sword and banner fall; she hastens to him with outstretched arms, and embraces him in great agitation. LA HIRE and DUNOIS throw down their swords, and hasten also to embrace him.*

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### ACT III.

*Residence of the KING at Chalons on the Marne.*

#### SCENE I.

DUNOIS, LA HIRE.

DUNOIS. We have been true heart-friends, brothers in arms,  
Still have we battled in a common cause,  
And held together amid toil and death.  
Let not the love of woman rend the bond  
Which hath resisted every stroke of fate.

HIRE. . Hear me, my Prince!

DUNOIS.

You love the wondrous maid,

And well I know the purpose of your heart.  
You think without delay to seek the King.  
And to entreat him to bestow on you  
Her hand in marriage.—Of your bravery  
The well-earn'd guerdon, he cannot refuse.  
But know,—ere I behold her in the arms  
Of any other—

LA HIRE.                    Listen to me, Prince !

DUNOIS. 'Tis not the fleeting passion of the eye  
Attracts me to her. My unconquer'd sense  
Had set at nought the fiery shafts of love  
Till I beheld this wondrous maiden, sent  
By a divine appointment to become  
The saviour of this kingdom, and my wife ;  
And on the instant in my heart I vow'd  
A sacred oath, to bear her home, my bride.  
For she alone who is endowed with strength  
Can be the strong man's friend. This glowing heart  
•Longs to repose upon a kindred breast,  
Which can sustain and comprehend its strength.

HIRE. . How dare I venture, Prince, my poor deserts  
To measure with your name's heroic fame !  
When Count Dunois appeareth in the lists,  
Each humbler suitor must forsake the field ;  
Still it doth ill become a shepherd maid  
To stand as consort by your princely side.  
The royal current in your veins would scorn  
To mix with blood of baser quality.

DUNOIS. She, like myself, is holy Nature's child,  
A child divine—hence we by birth are equal.  
She bring dishonour on a prince's hand,  
Who is the holy Angel's bride, whose head  
Is by a heavenly glory circled round,  
Whose radiance far outshineth earthly crowns,  
Who seeth lying far beneath her feet  
All that is greatest, highest, of this earth ;  
For thrones on thrones, ascending to the stars,  
Would fail to reach the height where she abides  
In angel majesty !

HIRE. . Our Monarch may decide.

DUNOIS.

Not so! she must

Decide! Free hath she made this realm of France,  
And she herself must freely give her heart.

HIRE . Here comes the King!

## SCENE II.

CHARLES, AGNES SOREL, DU CHATEL, and CHATILLON.

*The same.*CHARLES (*to* CHATILLON).

He comes! My title he will recognise,  
And do me homage as his sovereign Liege?

CHATIL. Here, in his royal town of Chalons, Sire,  
The Duke, my master, will fall down before thee.  
—He did command me, as my lord and king,  
To give thee greeting. He'll be ere anon.

SOREL. ~~He~~ comes! Hail beauteous and auspicious day,  
Which bringeth joy, and peace, and reconciliation!

CHATIL. The Duke, attended by two hundred knights,  
Will hither come; he at thy feet will kneel;  
But he expecteth not that thou to him  
Shouldst yield the cordial greeting of a kinsman.

CHAS . I long to clasp him to my throbbing heart.

CHATIL. The Duke entreats that at this interview,  
No word be spoken of the ancient strife!

CHAS. . In Letho be the past for ever sunk!  
The smiling future now invites our gaze.

CHATIL. All who have combated for Burgundy  
Shall be included in the amnesty.

CHAS. . So shall my realm be doubled in extent!

CHATIL. Queen Isabel, if she consent thereto,  
Shall also be included in the peace.

CHAS. . She maketh war on me, not I on her.  
With her alone it rests to end our quarrel.

CHATIL. Twelve knights shall answer for thy royal word.

CHAS. . My word is sacred.

CHATILLON. The Archbishop shall  
Between you break the consecrated host,  
As pledge and seal of cordial reconciliation

CHAS. . Let my eternal weal be forfeited,  
If my hand's friendly grasp belie my heart.  
What other surety doth the Duke require?

CHATILLON (*glancing at DU CHATEL*).

I see one standing here, whose presence, Sire,  
Perchance might poison the first interview.

[*Du CHATEL retires in silence.*]

CHAS. . Depart, Du Châtel, and remain conceal'd  
Until the Duke can bear thee in his sight.

[*He follows him with his eye, then hastens after  
and embraces him.*]

True-hearted friend! Thou wouldst far more than this  
Have done for my repose! [*Exit Du CHATEL.*]

CHATIL. This instrument doth name the other points.

CHARLES (*to the ARCHBISHOP*).

Let it be settled. We agree to all.

We count no price too high to gain a friend.

Go now, Dunois, and with a hundred knights,

Give courteous conduct to the noble Duke.

Let the troops, garlanded with verdant boughs,

Receive their comrades with a joyous welcome.

Be the whole town arrayed in festal pomp,

And let the bells with joyous peal, proclaim

That France and Burgundy are reconcil'd.

[*A PAGE enters. Trumpets sound.*]

Hark! What importeth that loud trumpet's call?

PAGE. . The Duke of Burgundy hath stayed his march. [*Exit*

DUNOIS. Up! forth to meet him!

[*Exit with LA HIRE and CHATILLON.*]

CHARLES (*to SOREL*).

My Agnes! thou dost weep! Even my strength

Doth almost fail me at this interview.

How many victims have been doom'd to fall

Ere we could meet in peace and reconciliation!

But every storm at length suspends its rage,

Day follows on the murkiest night; and still

When comes the hour, the latest fruits mature!

ARCHBISHOP (*at the window*).

The thronging crowds impede the Duke's advance;

He scarce can free himself. They lift him now

From off his horse; they kiss his spurs, his mantle.

CHAS. . They're a good people, in whom love flames forth

As suddenly as wrath.—In how brief space

They do forget that 'tis this very Duke

Who slew, in fight, their fathers and their sons ;  
 The moment swallows up the whole of life !  
 —Be tranquil, Sorel ! E'en thy passionate joy  
 Perchance might to his conscience prove a thorn.  
 Nothing should either shame or grieve him here.

## SCENE III.

*The DUKE OF BURGUNDY, DUNOIS, LA HIRE, CHATILLON, and two other Knights of the DUKE'S train. The DUKE remains standing at the door ; the KING inclines towards him ; BURGUNDY immediately advances, and in the moment when he is about to throw himself upon his knees, the KING receives him in his arms.*

CHAS. . You have surprised us—it was our intent  
 To fetch you hither—but your steeds are fleet.

BURG. . They bore me to my duty

[*He embraces SOREL, and kisses her brow.*  
 With your leave !

At Arras, niece, it is our privilege,  
 And no fair damsel may exemption claim.

CHAS. . Rumour doth speak your court the seat of love,  
 The mart, where all that's beautiful must tarry.

BURG. . We are a traffic-loving people, Sire ;  
 Whate'er of costly earth's wide realms produce,  
 For show and for enjoyment, is displayed  
 Upon our mart at Bruges ; but above all  
 There woman's beauty is pre-eminent.

SOREL. More precious far is woman's truth ; but it  
 Appeareth not upon the public mart.

CHAS. . Kinsman, 'tis rumour'd to your prejudice,  
 That woman's fairest virtue you despise.

BURG. . The heresy inflicteth on itself  
 The heaviest penalty. 'Tis well for you,  
 From your own heart, my King, you learn'd betimes,  
 What a wild life hath late reveal'd to me.

[*He perceives the ARCHBISHOP, and extends his hand.*  
 Most reverend minister of God ! your blessing !  
 You still are to be found on duty's path,  
 Where those must walk who would encounter you

ARCHB. Now let my Master call me when he will ;

My heart is full, I can with joy depart,  
 Since that mine eyes have seen this day !.

BURGUNDY (to SORIEL). 'Tis said

That of your precious stones you robb'd yourself,  
 Therefrom to forge 'gainst me the tools of war?

Bear you a soul so martial? Were you then  
 So resolute to work my overthrow?

Well, now our strife is over; what was lost  
 Will in due season all be found again.

Even your jewels have return'd to you.

Against me to make war they were design'd;

Receive them from me as a pledge of peace.

[*He receives a casket from one of the Attendants, and presents it to her open. SORIEL, embarrassed, looks at the KING.*]

CHAS. . Receive this present; 'tis a twofold pledge  
 Of reconciliation, and of fairest love.

BURGUNDY (*placing a diamond rose in her hair*).

Why, is it not the diadem of France?

With full as glad a spirit I would place

The golder circle on this lovely brow.

[*Taking her hand significantly.*]

And count on me if, at some future time,

You should require a friend!

[*AGNES SOREL bursts into tears, and steps aside. The KING struggles with his feelings. The bystanders contemplate the two PRINCES with emotion.*]

BURGUNDY (*after gazing round the circle, throws himself into the KING's arms*).

O, my King!

[*At the same moment the three Burgundian Knights hasten to DUNOIS, LA HIRE, and the ARCHBISHOP. They embrace each other. The two PRINCES remain for a time speechless in each other's arms.*]

I could renounce you! I could bear you hate!

CHAS. . Hush! hush! No further!

BURGUNDY.

I this English King

Could crown! Swear fealty to this foreigner!

And you, my Sovereign, into ruin plunge!



CHAS. . Forget it! Every thing's forgiven now!  
This single moment doth obliterate all!  
'Twas a malignant star! A destiny!

BURGUNDY (*grasps his hand*).

Believe me, Sire, I'll make amends for all.  
Your bitter sorrow I will compensate;  
You shall receive your kingdom back entire,  
A solitary village shall not fail!

CHAS. . We are united. Now I fear no foe.

BURG. . Trust me, it was not with a joyous spirit  
That I bore arms against you. Did you know—  
O wherefore sent you not this messenger?

[*Pointing to SOREL.*

I must have yielded to her gentle tears.  
—Henceforth, since breast to breast we have embraced,  
No power of hell again shall sever us!  
My erring course ends here. His Sovereign's heart  
Is the true resting place for Burgundy.

ARCHBISHOP (*steps between them*).

Ye are united, Princes! France doth rise  
A renovated phoenix from its ashes.  
Th' auspicious future greets us with a smile.  
The country's bleeding wounds will heal again,  
The villages, the desolated towns,  
Rise in new splendour from their ruin'd heaps,  
The fields array themselves in beauteous green—  
But those who, victims of your quarrel, fell,  
The dead, rise not again; the bitter tears,  
Caused by your strife, remain for ever wept!  
One generation hath been doom'd to woe,  
On their descendants dawns a brighter day.  
The gladness of the son wakes not the sire.  
This the dire fruitage of your brother-strife!  
Oh, Princes! learn from hence to pause with dread,  
Ere from its scabbard ye unsheath the sword.  
The man of power lets loose the god of war,  
But not, obedient, as from fields of air  
Returns the falcon to the sportsman's hand,  
Doth the wild deity obey the call  
Of mortal voice; nor will the Saviour's hand  
A second time forth issue from the clouds.

BURG. . O Sire ! an angel walketh by your side.

—Where is she ? Why do I behold her not ?

CHAS. . Where is Johanna ? Wherefore faileth she  
To grace the festival we owe to her ?

ARCHIB. She loves not, Sire, the idless of the court,  
And when the heavenly mandate calls her not  
Forth to the world's observance, she retires,  
And doth avoid the notice of the crowd !  
Doubtless, unless the welfare of the realm  
Claims her regard, she communes with her God,  
For still a blessing on her steps attends.

SCENE IV.

*The same.*

JOHANNA *enters.* *She is clad in armour, and wears a garland  
in her hair.*

CHAS. . Thou comest as a priestess deck'd, Johanna,  
To consecrate the union forin'd by thee !

BURG. . How dreadful was the Maiden in the fight !  
How lovely circled by the beams of peace !  
—My word, Johanna, have I now fulfill'd ?  
Art thou contented ? Have I thine applause ?

JOHAN. The greatest favour thou hast shown thyself.  
Array'd in blessed light thou shinest now,  
Who didst erewhile with bloody ominous ray,  
Hang like a moon of terror in the heavens.

*[Looking round]*

Many brave knights I find assembled here,  
And joy's glad radiance beams in every eye ;  
One mourner, one alone I have encounter'd,  
He must conceal himself, where all rejoice.

BURG. . And who is conscious of such heavy guilt,  
That of our favour he must needs despair ?

JOHAN. May he approach ? Oh tell me that he may.—  
Complete thy merit. Void the reconciliation  
That frees not the whole heart. A drop of hate  
Remaining in the cup of joy, converts  
The blessed draught to poison.—Let there be  
No deed so stain'd with blood, that Burgundy  
Cannot forgive it on this day of joy !

BURG. . Ha! now I understand!

JOHANNA.

And thou'lt forgive?

Thou wilt indeed forgive?—Come in, Duchâtel!

*[She opens the door and leads in DUCHÂTEL, who remains standing at a distance.]*

The Duke is reconciled to all his foes,  
And he is so to thee.

*[Duchâtel approaches a few steps nearer, and tries to read the countenance of the DUKE.]*

BURGUNDY.

What makest thou

Of me, Johanna? Know'st thou what thou askest?

JOHAN. A gracious sovereign throws his portals wide,

Admitting every guest, excluding none;

As freely as the firmament the world,

So mercy must encircle friend and foe.

Impartially the sun pours forth his beams

'Through all the regions of infinity;

The heaven's reviving dew falls every where,

And brings refreshment to each thirsty plant;

Whate'er is good, and cometh from on high,

Is universal, and without reserve;

But in the heart's recesses darkness dwells!

BURG. . Oh, she can mould me to her wish; my heart

Is in her forming hand like melted wax.

—Duchâtel, I forgive thee—come, embrace me!

Shade of my sire! oh, not with wrathful eye

Behold me clasp the hand that shed thy blood.

Ye death-gods, reckon not to my account,

That my dread oath of vengeance I abjure.

With you, in yon drear realm of endless night,

There beats no human heart, and all remains

Eternal, steadfast, and immoveable.

Here in the light of day 'tis otherwise.

Man, living feeling man, is aye the sport

Of the o'er-mast'ring present.

CHARLES (to JOHANNA).

Lofty maid!

What owe I not to thee! How truly now

Hast thou fulfill'd thy word,—how rapidly

Reversed my destiny! Thou hast appeased

My friends, and in the dust o'erwhelm'd my foes;

From foreign yoke redeem'd my cities.—Thou  
Hast all achieved.—Speak, how can I reward thee?

JOHAN. Sire, in prosperity be still humane,  
As in misfortune thou hast ever been ;  
—And on the height of greatness ne'er forget  
The value of a friend in times of need ;  
Thou hast approved it in adversity.  
Refuse not to the lowest of thy people  
The claims of justice and humanity,  
For thy deliv'rer from the fold was call'd.  
Beneath thy royal sceptre, thou shalt gather  
The realm entire of France. Thou shalt become  
The root and ancestor of mighty kings ;  
Succeeding monarchs, in their regal state,  
Shall those outshine, who fill'd the throne before  
Thy stock, in majesty shall bloom so long  
As it stands rooted in the people's love.  
Pride only can achieve its overthrow,  
And from the lowly station, whence to-day  
God summon'd thy deliv'rer, ruin dire  
Obscurely threatens thy crime-polluted sons !

BURG. Exalted maid ! Possessed with sacred fire !  
If thou canst look into the gulf of time,  
Speak also of my race ! Shall coming years  
With ampler honours crown my princely line ?

JOHAN. High as the throne, thou, Burgundy, hast built  
Thy seat of power, and thy aspiring heart  
Would raise still higher, even to the clouds,  
The lofty edifice.—But from on high  
A hand omnipotent shall check its rise.  
Fear thou not hence the downfall of thy house !  
Its glory in a maiden shall survive ;  
Upon her breast shall sceptre-bearing kings,  
The people's shepherds, bloom. Their ample sway  
Shall o'er two realms extend, they shall ordain  
Laws to control the known world, and the new,  
Which God still veils behind the pathless waves.

CHAS. . O, if the Spirit doth reveal it, speak ;  
Shall this alliance which we now renew  
In distant ages still unite our sons ?

JOHANNA (*after a pause*).

Sovereigns and kings! disunion shun with dread!  
Wake not contention from the murky cave  
Where he doth lie asleep, for once aroused  
He cannot soon be quell'd! He doth beget  
An iron brood, a ruthless progeny;  
Wildly the sweeping conflagration spreads.  
—Be satisfied! Seek not to question further!  
In the glad present let your hearts rejoice,  
The future let me shroud!

SORIEL.

Exalted maid!

Thou canst explore my heart, thou readest there  
If after worldly greatness it aspires,  
To me too give a joyous oracle.

JOHAN.

Of empires only I discern the doom;  
In thine own bosom lies thy destiny!

DUNOIS.

What, holy maid, will be thy destiny?  
Doubtless, for thee, who art belov'd of Heaven,  
The fairest earthly happiness shall bloom,  
For thou art pure and holy.

JOHANNA.

Happiness

Abideth yonder, with our God, in Heaven.

CHAS.

Thy fortune be henceforth thy Monarch's care!  
For I will glorify thy name in France,  
And the remotest age shall call thee blest.  
Thus I fulfil my word.—Kneel down!

[*He draws his sword and touches her with it.*

And rise

A noble! In thy Monarch, from the dust  
Of thy mean birth exalt thee.—In the grave  
Thy fathers I ennoble—thou shalt bear  
Upon thy shield the fleur-de-lis, and be  
Of equal lineage with the best in France.  
Only the royal blood of Valois shall  
Be nobler than thine own! The highest peer  
Shall feel himself exalted by thy hand;  
To wed thee nobly, maid, shall be my care.

DUNOIS (*advancing*).

My heart made choice of her when she was lowly;  
The recent honour which encircles her,  
Neither exalts her merit, nor my love.

Here in my sovereign's presence, and before  
This holy bishop, maid, I tender thee  
My hand, and take thee as my princely wife,  
If thou esteem me worthy to be thine.

CHAS. . Resistless maiden! wonder thou dost add  
To wonder! Yes, I now believe that nought's  
Impossible to thee. Thou hast subdued  
This haughty heart, which still hath scoff'd till now,  
At Love's omnipotence.

LA HIRE (*advancing*). If I have read  
Aright Johanna's soul, her modest heart's  
Her fairest jewel.—She deserveth well  
The homage of the great, but her desires  
Soar not so high.—She striveth not to reach  
A giddy eminence; an honest heart's  
True love contents her, and the quiet lot  
Which with this hand I humbly proffer her.

CHAS. . Thou too, La Hire! two brave competitors,—  
Peers in heroic virtue and renown!  
—Wilt thou, who hast appeased mine enemies,  
My realms united, part my dearest friends?  
One only can possess her; I esteem  
Each to be justly worthy such a prize.  
Speak, maid! thy heart alone must here decide.

SOREL. The noble maiden is surprised, her cheek  
Is crimson'd over with a modest blush.  
Let her have leisure to consult her heart,  
And in confiding friendship to unseal  
Her long-closed bosom. Now the hour is come  
When, with a sister's love, I also may  
Approach the maid severe, and offer her  
This silent faithful breast.—Permit us women  
Alone to weigh this womanly affair;  
Do you await the issue.

CHARLES (*about to retire*). Be it so!

JOHAN. No, Sire, not so! the crimson on my cheek  
Is not the blush of bashful modesty.  
Nought have I for this noble lady's ear  
Which in this presence I may not proclaim.  
The choice of these brave knights much honours me,  
But I did not forsake my shepherd-walks,

To chase vain worldly splendour, nor array  
My tender frame in panoply of war,  
To twine the bridal garland in my hair.  
Far other labour is assign'd to me,  
Which a pure maiden can alone achieve.  
I am the soldier of the Lord of Hosts,  
And to no mortal man can I be wife.

ARCHD. To be a fond companion unto man  
Is woman born—when nature she obeys,  
Most wisely she fulfils high Heaven's decree!  
When his behest who call'd thee to the field  
Shall be accomplish'd, thou'lt resign thine arms,  
And once again rejoin the softer sex,  
Whose gentle nature thou dost now forego,  
And which from war's stern duties is exempt.

JOHAN Most reverend Sir! as yet I cannot say  
What work the Spirit will enjoin on me.  
But when the time comes round, his guiding voice  
Will not be mute, and it I will obey.  
Now he commands me to complete my task,  
My royal Master's brow is still uncrown'd,  
Still unanointed is his sacred head;  
My Sovereign cannot yet be call'd a king.

CHAS. . We are advancing on the way to Rheims.

JOHAN. Let us not linger, for the enemy  
Is planning how to intercept thy course:  
I will conduct thee through the midst of them!

DUNOIS. And when thy holy mission is fulfill'd,  
When we in triumph shall have enter'd Rheims,  
Wilt thou not then permit me, sacred maid—

JOHAN. If Heaven ordain that, from the strife of death,  
Crown'd with the wreath of conquest, I return,  
My task will be accomplish'd—and the maid  
Hath, thenceforth, in the palace nought to do.

CHARLES (*taking her hand*).

It is the Spirit's voice impels thee now;  
Love in thy bosom, Heaven-inspir'd, is mute;  
'Twill not be ever so; believe me, maid!  
Our weapons will repose, and victory  
Will by the hand lead forward gentle peace;

Joy will return again to every breast,  
 And softer feelings wake in every heart,—  
 They will awaken also in thy breast,  
 And tears of gentle longing thou wilt weep,  
 Such as thine eye hath never shed before;  
 —This heart, which Heaven now occupies alone,  
 Will fondly open to an earthly friend—  
 'Thousands thou hast till now redeem'd and bless'd.  
 Thou wilt at length conclude by blessing one!

JOHAN. Art weary, Dauphin, of the heavenly vision,  
 That thou its vessel wouldst annihilate?  
 The holy maiden, sent to thee by God,  
 Degrade, reducing her to common dust?  
 Ye blind of heart! O ye of little faith!  
 God's glory shines around you. to your gaze  
 He doth reveal his wonders, and ye see  
 Nought but a woman in me. Dare a woman  
 In iron panoply array herself,  
 And boldly mingle in the strife of men?  
 Wo, wo is me! if e'er my hand should wield  
 The avenging sword of God, and my vain heart  
 Cherish affection to a mortal man!  
 'Twere better for me I had ne'er been born!  
 Henceforth no more of this, unless ye would  
 Provoke the Spirit's wrath who in me dwells!  
 The eye of man, regarding me with love,  
 To me is horror and profanity.

CHAS. . Forbear! It is in vain to urge her further.

JOHAN. Command the trumpets of the war to sound!  
 This stillness doth perplex and harass me;  
 An inward impulse drives me from repose,  
 It still impels me to achieve my work,  
 And sternly beckons me to meet my doom.

#### SCENE V.

*A Knight, entering hastily.*

CHAS. . What tidings? Speak!

KNIGHT. The foe has cross'd the Marne,  
 And marshalleth his army for the fight.



JOHANNA (*inspired*).

Battle and tumult! Now my soul is free.  
Arm, warriors, arm! while I prepare the troops.

[*She goes out.*]

CHAS. . Follow, La Hire! E'en at the gates of Rheims  
They will compel us to dispute the crown!

DUNOIS. No genuine courage prompts them. This essay  
Is the last effort of enraged despair.

CHAS. . I do not urge you, Duke. To-day's the time  
To compensate the errors of the past.

BURG. . You shall be satisfied with me.

CHARLES.

Myself

Will march before you on the path of fame;  
Here, with my royal town of Rheims in view,  
I'll fight, and gallantly achieve the crown.

Thy knight, my Agnes, bids thee now farewell!

AGNES (*embracing him*).

I do not weep, I do not tremble for thee;  
My faith, unshaken, cleaveth unto God!  
Heaven, were we doom'd to failure, had not given  
So many gracious pledges of success!  
My heart doth whisper me that, victory-crown'd,  
In conquer'd Rheims, I shall embrace my King.

[*Trumpets sound with a spirited tone, and while the scene is changing, pass into a wild martial strain. When the scene opens, the orchestra joins in, accompanied by warlike instruments behind the scene.*]

#### SCENE VI.

*The Scene changes to an open country, skirted with trees.  
During the music, Soldiers are seen retreating hastily across  
the back-ground.*

TALBOT, leaning on FASTOLFE, and accompanied by Soldiers.  
Soon after, LIONEL.

TALBOT. Here lay me down, beneath these trees, and then  
Betake you back, with speed, unto the fight;  
I need no aid to die.

FASTOLFE.

Oh woful day! | LIONEL enters.

Behold what sight awaits you, Lionel!

Here lies our General, wounded unto death.

LIONEL. Now, God forbid! My noble Lord, arise!  
No moment this to falter and to sink.  
Yield not to death. By your all-powerful will,  
Command your ebbing spirit still to live.

TALBOT. In vain! The day of destiny is come,  
Which will o'erthrow the English power in France.  
In desperate combat I have vainly risk'd  
The remnant of our force to ward it off.  
Struck by the thunderbolt I prostrate lie,  
Never to rise again.—Rheims now is lost,  
Hasten to succour Paris!

LIONEL. Paris is with the Dauphin reconcil'd;  
A courier even now hath brought the news.

TALBOT (*tearing off his bandages*).  
Then freely flow, ye currents of my blood,  
For Talbot now is weary of the sun!

LIONEL. I may no longer tarry: Fastolfe, haste!  
Convey our leader to a place of safety.  
No longer now can we maintain this post;  
Our flying troops disperse on every side,  
On, with resistless might, the Maiden comes.

TALBOT. Folly, thou conquerest, and I must yield!  
Against stupidity the very gods  
Themselves contend in vain. Exalted reason,  
Resplendent daughter of the head divine,  
Wise foundress of the system of the world,  
Guide of the stars, who art thou then, if thou,  
Bound to the tail of folly's uncurb'd steed,  
Must, vainly shrieking, with the drunken crowd,  
Eyes open, plunge down headlong in the abyss.  
Accurs'd, who striveth after noble ends,  
And with deliberate wisdom forms his plans!  
'To the fool-king belongs the world—

LIONEL. My Lord,  
But for a few brief moments can you live—  
Think of your Maker!

TALBOT. Had we, like brave men,  
Been vanquished by the brave, we might, indeed,  
Console ourselves that 'twas the common lot;  
For fickle fortune eke revolves her wheel.

But to be baffled by such juggling arts !  
 Deserv'd our earnest and laborious life  
 Not a more earnest issue ?

LIONEL (*extends his hand to him*). Fare you well !  
 The debt of honest tears I will discharge  
 After the battle—if I then survive.  
 Now Fate doth call me hence, where on the field  
 Her web she weaveth, and dispenseth doom.  
 We in another world shall meet again ;  
 For our long friendship, this a brief farewell. [*Exit.*]  
 TALBOT. Soon is the struggle past, and to the earth,  
 To the eternal sun, I render back  
 These atoms, join'd in me for pain and pleasure.  
 And of the mighty Talbot, who the world  
 Fill'd with his martial glory, there remains  
 Nought save a modicum of senseless dust.  
 —Such is the end of man !—the only spoil  
 We carry with us from life's battle-field,  
 Is but an insight into nothingness,  
 And utter scorn of all which once appear'd  
 To us exalted and desirable.—

## SCENE VII

CHARLES, BURGUNDY, DUNOIS, DU CHATILL, and Soldiers.

BURG. . The trench is storm'd !

DUNOIS. The victory is ours !

CHARLES (*perceiving TALBOT*).

Look ! Who is he, who yonder of the sun  
 Taketh reluctant, sorrowful farewell ?  
 His armour indicates no common man ;  
 Go, succour him, if aid may yet avail.

[*Soldiers of the KING's retinue step forward.*]

FASTOL. Back ! Stand apart ! Respect the mighty dead,  
 Whom ye, in life, ne'er ventur'd to approach !

BURG. . What do I see ? Lord Talbot in his blood !

[*He approaches him. TALBOT gazes fixedly at him, and dies.*]

FASTOL. Traitor avaunt ! Let not the sight of thee  
 Poison the dying hero's parting glance.

DUNOIS. Resistless hero ! Dread-inspiring Talbot !  
 Does such a narrow space suffice thee now,

And this vast kingdom could not satisfy  
 The large ambition of thy giant soul !  
 — Now first I can salute you, Sire, as King :  
 The diadem but totter'd on your brow,  
 While yet a spirit tenanted this clay.

CHARLES (*after contemplating the body in silence*).

A higher power hath vanquish'd him, not we !  
 He lies upon the soil of France, as lies  
 The hero on the shield he would not quit.  
 Well, peace be with his ashes ! Bear him hence !

[*Soldiers take up the body and carry it away.*]

Here, in the heart of France, where his career  
 Of conquest ended, let his reliques lie !  
 So far no hostile sword attain'd before.  
 A fitting tomb shall memorize his name ;  
 His epitaph the spot whereon he fell.

F'ASTOLFE (*yielding his sword*).

I am your prisoner, Sir.

CHARLES (*returning his sword*). Not so ! Rude war  
 Respects each pious office ; you are free  
 To render the last honours to the dead.  
 Go now, Du Châtel.—still my Agnes trembles—  
 Hasten to snatch her from anxiety—  
 Bring her the tidings of our victory,  
 And usher her in triumph into Rheims !

[*Exit DU CHATEL.*]

#### SCENE VIII.

*The same.* LA HIRE.

DUNOIS. La Hire, where is the Maiden ?

LA HIRE. That I ask  
 Of you ; I left her fighting by your side.

DUNOIS. I thought she was protected by your arm,  
 When I departed to assist the King.

BURG. . Not long ago I saw her banner wave  
 Amid the thickest of the hostile ranks.

DUNOIS. Alas ! where is she ? Evil I forebode !  
 Come, let us haste to rescue her.— I fear  
 Her daring soul hath led her on too far ;  
 Alone, she combats in the midst of foes,  
 And without succour yieldeth to the crowd.

CHAS. . . Haste to her rescue!

LA HIRL.

Come!

BERGUNDY.

We follow all! [*Exit.*  
*They retire in haste.*]

*A deserted part of the battle-field. In the distance are  
seen the towers of Rheims illumined by the sun.*

### SCENE IX.

*A KNIGHT in black armour, with closed visor. JOHANNA  
follows him to the front of the stage, where he stops and  
awaits her.*

JOHAN. Deluder! now I see thy stratagem!

'Thou hast deceitfully, through seeming flight,  
Allur'd me from the battle, doom and death  
Averting thus from many a British head.  
Destruction now doth overtake thyself.

KNIGHT. Why dost thou follow after me and track  
My steps with quenchless rage? I am not doom'd  
To perish by thy hand.

JOHANNA. Deep in my soul  
I hate thee as the night, which is thy colour.  
To blot thee out from the fair light of day  
An irresistible desire impels me.  
Who art thou? Raise thy visor.—I had said  
That thou wert Talbot, had I not myself  
Seen warlike Talbot in the battle fall.

KNIGHT. Is the divining Spirit mute in thee?

JOHAN. His voice speaks loudly in my spirit's depths  
The near approach of wo.

BLACK KNIGHT. Johanna D'Arc!  
Borne on the wings of conquest, thou hast reach'd  
The gates of Rheims. Let thy achiev'd renown  
Content thee. Fortune, like thy slave, till now  
Hath follow'd thee; dismiss her, ere in wrath  
She free herself; fidelity she hates;  
She serveth none with constancy till death.

JOHAN. Why check me in the midst of my career?  
Why bid me falter and forsake my work?  
I will complete it, and fulfil my vow!

KNIGHT. Nothing can thee, thou mighty one, withstand,

In battle thou art aye invincible.

—But henceforth shun the fight; attend my warning!

JOHAN. Not from my hand will I resign this sword  
Till haughty England's prostrate in the dust.

KNIGHT. Behold! there Rheims ariseth with its towers,  
The goal and end of thy career.—Thou seest  
The lofty minster's sun-illumin'd dome;  
Thou in triumphal pomp wouldst enter there,  
Thy Monarch crown, and ratify thy vow.

—Enter not there! Return! Attend my warning!

JOHAN. What art thou, double-tongue'd, deceitful being,  
Who wouldst bewilder and appal me? Speak!  
By what authority dost thou presume  
To greet me with fallacious oracles?

[*The BLACK KNIGHT is about to depart, she steps in his way.*

No, thou shalt speak, or perish by my hand!

[*She endeavours to strike him.*

BLACK KNIGHT (*touches her with his hand, she remains motionless*).

Slay, what is mortal!

[*Darkness, thunder and lightning. The KNIGHT sinks into the earth.*

JOHANNA (*stands at first in amazement, but soon recovers herself*)

'Twas nothing living. 'Twas a base delusion,  
An instrument of Hell, a juggling fiend,  
Uprisen hither from the fiery pool  
To shake and terrify my stedfast heart.  
Wielding the sword of God, whom should I fear?  
I will triumphantly achieve my work.  
My courage should not waver, should not fail,  
Were Hell itself to champion me to fight!

[*She is about to depart.*

## SCENE X.

LIONEL, JOHANNA.

LIONEL. Accursed one, prepare thee for the fight!

—Not both of us shall quit this field alive.

Thou hast destroy'd the bravest of our host:

The noble Talbot hath his mighty soul  
 Breathed forth upon my bosom.—I'll avenge  
 The hero, or participate his doom.  
 And wouldst thou know who brings thee glory now,  
 Whether he live or die,—I'm Lionel,  
 The sole survivor of the English chiefs,  
 And still unconquer'd is this valiant arm.

*[He rushes upon her; after a short combat she strikes the sword out of his hand.]*

Perfidious fortune!

*[He wrestles with her. JOHANNA seizes him by the crest and tears open his helmet; his face is thus exposed; at the same time she draws her sword with her right hand.]*

JOHANNA. Suffer what thou soughtest!

The Virgin sacrifices thee through me!

*[At this moment she gazes in his face. His aspect softens her, she remains motionless and slowly lets her arm sink.]*

LIONEL. Why linger, why withhold the stroke of death?

My glory thou hast taken—take my life!

I want no mercy, I am in thy power.

*[She makes him a sign with her hand to fly.]*

How! shall I fly, and owe my life to thee?

No, I would rather die!

JOHANNA *(with averted face)*. I will not know

That ever thou didst owe thy life to me.

LIONEL. I hate alike thee and thy proffer'd gift.

I want no mercy—kill thine enemy,

Who loathes and would have slain thee.

JOHANNA. Slay me then,

And fly!

LIONEL. Ha! What is this?

JOHANNA *(judging her face)*.

Wo's me!

LIONEL *(approaching her)*.

'Tis said

Thou killest all the English, whom thy sword

Subdues in battle—why spare me alone?

JOHANNA *(raises her sword with a rapid movement, as if to strike him, but lets it fall quickly when she gazes on his face)*.

O Holy Virgin!

LIONEL. Wherefore namest thou  
The Holy Virgin? she knows nought of thee;  
Heaven hath no part in thee.

JOHANNA (*in the greatest anxiety*). What have I done!  
Alas! I've broke my vow!

*[She wrings her hands in despair.]*

LIONEL (*looks at her with sympathy and approaches her*)  
Unhappy Maid!

I pity thee! Thy sorrow touches me;  
Thou hast shown mercy unto me alone,  
My hatred yielded unto sympathy!  
—Who art thou, and whence comest thou?

JOHANNA. Away!

LIONEL. Thy youth, thy beauty, move my soul to pity!  
Thy look sinks in my heart. I fain would save thee—  
How may I do so? tell me. Come! oh come!  
Renounce this fearful league—throw down the scarms!

JOHAN. I am unworthy now to carry them!

LIONEL. Then throw them from thee—quick! come follow me!

JOHANNA (*with horror*).  
How! follow thee!

LIONEL. Thou mayst be saved. Oh come!  
I will deliver thee, but linger not.  
Strange sorrow for thy sake doth seize my heart,  
Unspeakable desire to rescue thee—

*[He seizes her arm.]*

JOHAN. The Bastard comes! 'Tis they! They seek for me!  
If they should find thee—

LIONEL. I'll defend thee, Maid!

JOHAN. I die if thou shouldst perish by their hands!

LIONEL. Am I then dear to thee?

JOHANNA. Ye heavenly Powers!

LIONEL. Shall I again behold thee—hear from thee?

JOHAN. No! never!

LIONEL. Thus this sword I seize, in pledge  
That I again behold thee!

*[He snatches her sword.]*

JOHANNA. Madman, hold!

Thou darest?

LIONEL. Now I yield to force—again

I'll see thee! *[He retires.]*



## SCENE XI.

JOHANNA, DUNOIS, LA HIRE.

LA HIRE.

It is she! The Maiden lives!

DUNOIS. Fear not, Johanna! friends are at thy side.

HIRE. Is not that Lionel who yonder flies?

DUNOIS. Let him escape! Maiden, the righteous cause

Hath triumph'd now. Rhénus opens wide its gates;

The joyous crowds pour forth to meet their King—

HIRE. What ails the Maiden? She grows pale—she sinks!

[JOHANNA grows dizzy, and is about to fall,

DUNOIS. She's wounded—rend her breastplate—'tis her arm!

The wound is not severe.

LA HIRE.

Her blood doth flow.

JOHAN. Oh that my life would stream forth with my blood!

[She lies senseless in LA HIRE'S arms

## ACT IV.

*A hall adorned as for a festival; the columns are hung with  
garlands; behind the scene flutes and hautboys.*

## SCENE I.

JOHAN. Hushed in the din of arms, war's storms subside,  
Glad song and dance succeed the bloody fray,  
Through all the streets joy echoes far and wide,  
Altar and church are deck'd in rich array,  
Triumphal arches rise in vernal pride,  
Wreaths round the columns wind their flow'ry way,  
Wide Rhénus cannot contain the mighty throng,  
Which to the joyous pageant rolls along

One thought alone doth every heart possess,  
One rapturous feeling o'er each breast preside.  
And those to-day are link'd in happiness

Whom bloody hatred did erowhile divide.  
All who themselves of Gallic race confess  
The name of Frenchman own with conscious pride,  
France sees the splendour of her ancient crown,  
And to her Monarch's son bows humbly down.

Yet I, the author of this wide delight,  
The joy, myself created, cannot share;  
My heart is chang'd, in sad and dreary plight  
It flies the festive pageant in despair;  
Still to the British camp it taketh flight,  
Against my will my gaze still wanders there,  
And from the throng I steal, with grief oppress'd,  
To hide the guilt which weighs upon my breast.

What! I permit a human form  
To haunt my bosom's sacred cell?  
And there, where heavenly radiance shone,  
Doth earthly love presume to dwell?  
The saviour of my country, I,  
The warrior of God most high,  
Burn for my country's foeman? Dare I name  
Heaven's holy light, nor feel o'erwhelm'd with shame?  
*[The music behind the scene passes into a soft and moving melody.]*

Wo is me! 'Those melting tones!  
They distract my 'wilder'd brain!  
Every note, his voice recalling,  
Conjures up his form again!

Would that spears were whizzing round!  
Would that battle's thunder roar'd!  
'Midst the wild tumultuous sound  
My former strength were then restored.

These sweet tones, these melting voices,  
With seductive power are fraught!  
They dissolve, in gentle longing,  
Every feeling, every thought,  
Waking tears of plaintive sadness!

[*After a pause, with more energy.*  
Should I have kill'd him? Could I, when I gazed  
Upon his face? Kill'd him? Oh, rather far  
Would I have turn'd my weapon 'gainst myself!  
And am I culpable because humane?  
Is pity sinful?—Pity! Didst thou hear  
The voice of pity and humanity,  
When others fell the victims of thy sword?  
Why was she silent when the gentle youth  
From Wales, entreated thee to spare his life?  
O, cunning heart! Thou liest before high Heaven;  
It is not pity's voice impels thee now!  
—Why was I doom'd to look into his eyes!  
To mark his noble features! With that glance,  
Thy crime, thy wo commenc'd. Unhappy one!  
A sightless instrument thy God demands,  
Blindly thou must accomplish his behest!  
When thou didst see, God's shield abandon'd thee,  
And the dire snares of Hell around thee press'd!  
[*Flutes are again heard, and she subsides into  
a quiet melancholy.*

Harmless staff! Oh, that I ne'er  
Had for the sword abandon'd thee!  
Had voices never reached mine ear,  
From thy branches, sacred tree!  
High Queen of Heaven! Oh would that thou  
Hadst ne'er reveal'd thyself to me!  
Take back—I dare not claim it now—  
Take back thy crown, 'tis not for me!

I saw the heavens open wide,  
I gazed upon that face of love!  
Yet here on earth my hopes abide,  
They do not dwell in heaven above!  
Why, Holy One, on me impose  
This dread vocation? Could I steel,  
And to each soft emotion close  
This heart, by nature form'd to feel?

Wouldst thou proclaim thy high command,  
Make choice of those who, free from sin,

In thy eternal mansions stand ;  
 Send forth thy flaming cherubim !  
 Immortal ones, thy law they keep,  
 They do not feel, they do not weep !  
 Choose not a tender woman's aid,  
 Not the frail soul of shepherd maid !

Was I concern'd with warlike things,  
 With battles or the strife of kings "  
 In innocence I led my sheep  
 Adown the mountain's silent steep.  
 But thou didst send me into life,  
 'Midst princely halls and scenes of strife.  
 To lose my spirit's tender bloom :  
 Alas, I did not seek my doom !

## SCENE II.

AGNES SOREL, JOHANNA.

SOREL. (*advances joyfully. When she perceives JOHANNA, she hastens to her and falls upon her neck ; then suddenly recollecting herself, she relinquishes her hold, and falls down before her*).

No ! no ! not so ! Before thee in the dust—

JOHANNA (*trying to raise her*).

Arise ! Thou dost forget thyself and me.

SOREL. Forbid me not ! 'tis the excess of joy  
 Which throws me at thy feet—I must pour forth  
 My o'ercharged heart in gratitude to God ;  
 I worship the Invisible in thee.  
 Thou art the angel, who hast led my Lord  
 To Rheims, to crown him with the royal crown.  
 What I ne'er dream'd to see, is realized !  
 The coronation-march will soon set forth ;  
 Array'd in festal pomp, the Monarch stands :  
 Assembled are the nobles of the realm,  
 The mighty peers, to bear the insignia ;  
 To the cathedral rolls the billowy crowd ;  
 Glad songs resound, the bells unite their peal ;  
 Oh, this excess of joy I cannot bear !

[JOHANNA gently raises her. AGNES SOREL pauses a moment, and surveys the MAIDEN more narrowly.]

Yet thou remainest ever grave and stern;  
 Thou canst create delight, yet share it not.  
 Thy heart is cold, thou scelest not our joy,  
 Thou hast beheld the glories of the skies;  
 No earthly interest moveth thy pure breast.

[JOHANNA seizes her hand passionately, but soon  
 lets it fall again.]

Oh, couldst thou own a woman's feeling heart!  
 Put off this armour, war is over now.  
 Confess thy union with the softer sex!  
 My loving heart shrinks timidly from thee,  
 While thus thou wearest Pallas' brow severe.

JOHAN. What wouldst thou have me do?

SOREL. Unarm thyself!

Put off this coat of mail! The God of Love  
 Fears to approach a bosom clad in steel.  
 Oh, be a woman, thou wilt feel his power!

JOHAN. What, now unarm myself? 'Midst battle's roar  
 I'll bare my bosom to the stroke of death!  
 Not now!—Would that a sevenfold wall of brass  
 Could hide me from your revels, from myself!

SOREL. Thou'rt loved by Count Dunois. His noble heart,  
 Which virtue and renown alone inspire,  
 With pure and holy passion glows for thee.  
 Oh, it is sweet to know oneself belov'd  
 By such a hero—sweeter still to love him!

JOHANNA turns away with aversion.

Thou hatest him?—no, no, thou only canst  
 Not love him:—how could hatred stir thy breast!  
 Those who would tear us from the one we love,  
 We hate alone; but none can claim thy love.  
 Thy heart is tranquil—if it could but feel—

JOHAN. Oh, pity me! Lament my hapless fate!

SOREL. What can be wanting to complete thy joy?  
 Thou hast fulfill'd thy promise, France is free,  
 To Rheims, in triumph, thou hast led the King,  
 Thy mighty deeds have gain'd thee high renown,  
 A happy people praise and worship thee;  
 Thy name, the honour'd theme of every tongue;  
 Thou art the goddess of this festival:

The Monarch, with his crown and regal state,  
Shines not with greater majesty than thou!

JOHAN. Oh, could I hide me in the depths of earth!

SOREL. Why this emotion? Whence this strange distress?

Who may to-day look up without a fear,  
If thou dost cast thine eyes upon the ground!

It is for me to blush, me, who near thee

Feel all my littleness; I cannot reach

Thy lofty virtue, thy heroic strength!

For—all my weakness shall I own to thee?

Not the renown of France, my Fatherland,

Not the new splendour of the Monarch's crown,

Not the triumphant gladness of the crowds,

Engage this woman's heart. One only form

Is in its depths enshrined; it hath not room

For any feeling save for one alone:

He is the idol, him the people bless,

Him they extol, for him they strew these flowers,

And he is mine, he is my own true love!

JOHAN. Oh, thou art happy! thou art bless'd indeed!

Thou lovest, where all love. Thou mayst, unblamed,

Pour forth thy rapture, and thine inmost heart

Fearless discover to the gaze of man!

Thy country's triumph is thy lover's too.

The vast, innumerable multitudes,

Who, rolling onward, crowd within these walls,

Participate thy joy, they hallow it;

Thee they salute, for thee they twine the wreath,

Thou art a portion of the general joy;

Thou lovest the all-inspiring soul, the sun,

And what thou seest is thy lover's glory!

SOREL (*falling on her neck*).

Thou dost delight me, thou canst read my heart!

I did thee wrong, thou knowest what love is,

Thou tell'st my feelings with a voice of power.

My heart forgets its fear and its reserve,

And seeks confidingly to blend with thine—

JOHANNA (*tearing herself from her with violence*).

Forsake me! Turn away! Do not pollute

Thyself by longer intercourse with me!

Be happy! go—and in the deepest night  
Leave me to hide my infamy, my wo!

SOREL. Thou frighten'st me, I understand thee not,  
I ne'er have understood thee—for from me  
Thy dark mysterious being still was veil'd.  
Who may divine what thus disturbs thy heart,  
Thus terrifies thy pure and sacred soul!

JOHAN. Thou art the pure, the holy one! Couldst thou  
Behold mine inmost heart, thou, shuddering,  
Wouldst fly the traitoress, the enemy!

## SCENE III.

DUNOIS, DUCHATEL, and LA HIRE, with the Banner of  
JOHANNA.

DUNOIS. Johanna, thee we seek. All is prepared;  
The King hath sent us, 'tis his royal will  
That thou before him shouldst thy banner bear;  
The company of princes thou shalt join,  
And march immediately before the King:  
For he doth not deny it, and the world  
Shall witness, Maiden, that to thee alone  
He doth ascribe the honour of this day.

HIRE. Here is the banner 'Take it, noble Maiden'  
Thou'rt stayed for by the princes and the people.

JOHAN. I march before him? I the banner bear?

DUNOIS. Whom else would it become! What other hand  
Is pure enough to bear the sacred ensign!  
Amid the battle thou hast waved it oft;  
To grace our glad procession bear it now.

[LA HIRE presents the banner to her, she draws back,  
shuddering.]

JOHAN. Away! away!

LA HIRE. How! Art thou terrified  
At thine own banner, Maiden?—Look at it!

[He displays the banner.]

It is the same, thou didst in conquest wave.  
Imaged upon it is the Queen of Heaven,  
Floating in glory o'er this earthly ball;  
For so the Holy Mother show'd it thee.

[JOHANNA, gazing upon it with horror.]

'Tis she herself! so she appear'd to me.  
See, how she looks at me and knits her brow,  
And anger flashes from her threatening eye!

SOREL. Alas, she raveth! Maiden, be composed!  
Collect thyself! Thou seest nothing real!  
'That is her pictured image; she herself  
Wanders above, amid the angelic quire!

JOHAN. Thou comest, fearful one, to punish me?  
Destroy, o'erwhelm, thine arrowy lightnings hurl  
And let them fall upon my guilty head.  
Alas, my vow I've broken! I've profaned  
And desecrated thy most holy name!

DUNOIS. Wo 's us! What may this mean? What unblest words?

LA HIRE (in astonishment, to DUCHATEL).

This strange emotion canst thou comprehend?

DUCHAT. That which I see, I see—I long have fear'd it.

DUNOIS. What sayest thou?

DUCHAT. I dare not speak my thoughts.

I would to Heaven that the King were crown'd!

HIRE. How! hath the awe this banner doth inspire  
Turn'd back upon thyself? before this sign  
Let Britons tremble; to the foes of France  
'Tis fearful, but to all true citizens  
It is auspicious.

JOHANNA. Yes, thou sayest truly!

To friends 'tis gracious! but to enemies

It causeth horror!

*The Coronation march is heard.*

DUNOIS Take thy banner, then!

The march begins—no time is to be lost!

*[They press the banner upon her; she seizes it with  
evident emotion, and retires; the others follow.]*

*[The scene changes to an open place before the Cathedral.]*

#### SCENE IV.

*Spectators occupy the background; BERTRAND, CLAUDE MARIE  
and ÉTIENNE come forward; then MARGOT and LOUISEON  
The Coronation march is heard in the distance.*

BERT. Hark to the music! They approach already!  
What had we better do? Shall we mount up



Upon the platform, or press through the crowd,  
That we may nothing lose of the procession ?

ETIEN. It is not to be thought of. All the streets  
Are throng'd with horsemen and with carriages.  
Beside these houses let us take our stand.  
Here we without annoyance may behold  
The train as it goes by.

CLAUDE MARIE. Almost it seems  
As were the half of France assembled here ;  
So mighty is the flood that it hath reached  
Even our distant Lotharingian land  
And borne us hither !

BERTRAND. Who would sit at home  
When great events are stirring in the land !  
It hath cost plenty, both of sweat and blood,  
Ere the crown rested on its rightful head !  
Nor shall our lawful King, to whom we give  
The crown, be worse accompanied than he  
Whom the Parisians in St. Denis crown'd !  
He is no loyal honest-minded man  
Who doth absent him from this festival,  
And joins not in the cry : " God save the King ! "

#### SCENE V.

*MARGOT and LOUISE join them.*

LOUIS. We shall again behold our sister, Margot !  
How my heart beats !

MARGOT. In majesty and pomp  
We shall behold her, saying to ourselves :  
It is our sister, it is our Johanna !

LOUIS. Till I have seen her, I can scarce believe  
That she, whom men the Maid of Orleans name,  
The mighty warrior, is indeed Johanna,  
Our sister whom we lost !

*[The music draws nearer.*  
Thou doubtest still !

MARGOT. Thou wilt thyself behold her !

BERTRAND. See, they come !

## SCENE VI.

*[Musicians, with flutes and hautboys, open the procession. Children follow, dressed in white, with branches in their hands; behind them two heralds. Then a procession of halberdiers, followed by magistrates in their robes. Then two marshals with their staves; the DUKE of BURGUNDY, bearing the sword; DUNOIS with the sceptre, other nobles with the regalia; others with sacrificial offerings. Behind these, KNIGHTS with the ornaments of their order; choristers with incense; two BISHOPS with the ampulla; the ARCHBISHOP with the crucifix. JOHANNA follows, with her banner, she walks with downcast head and wavering steps; her sisters, on beholding her, express their astonishment and joy. Behind her comes the KING under a canopy, supported by four barons; courtiers follow, soldiers conclude the procession; as soon as it has entered the church the music ceases.]*

## SCENE VII.

LOUISON, MARGOT, CLAUDE MARIE, ETIENNE, BERTRAND.

MARG. Saw you our sister?

CLAUDE MARIE. She in golden armour,  
Who with the banner walked before the King?

MARG. It was Johanna. It was she, our sister!

LOUIS. She recognised us not! She did not feel  
That we, her sisters, were so near to her.  
She look'd upon the ground, and seemed so pale,  
And trembled so beneath her banner's weight—  
When I beheld her, I could not rejoice.

MARG. So now, arrayed in splendour and in pomp,  
I have beheld our sister—Who in dreams  
Would ever have imagined or conceiv'd,  
When on our native hills she drove the flock,  
That we should see her in such majesty?

LOUIS. Our father's dream is realized, that we  
In Rheims before our sister should bow down.  
That is the church, which in his dream he saw,  
And each particular is now fulfilled.

But images of wo he also saw !

Alas ! I'm griev'd to see her raised so high !

BERT. . Why stand we idly here ? Let's to the church  
To view the coronation !

MARGOT. Yes ! Perchance  
We there may meet our sister ; let us go !

LOUIS. . We have beheld her. Let us now return  
Back to our village.

MARGOT. How ? Ere we with her  
Have interchanged a word ?

LOUISE. She doth belong  
To us no longer ; she with princes stands  
And monarchs.—Who are we, that we should seek  
With foolish vanity to near her state ?  
She was a stranger, while she dwelt with us !

MARG. . Will she despise, and treat us with contempt ?

BERT. . The King himself is not ashamed of us,  
He kindly greets the meanest of the crowd.  
How high so ever she may be exalted,  
The King is raised still higher !  
[*Trumpets and kettle-drums are heard from the church.*

CLAUDE MARIE. Let's to the church !  
[*They hasten to the background, where they are lost among the crowd.*

SCENE VIII.

THIBAUT *enters, clad in black.* RAIMOND *follows him, and tries to hold him back.*

RAIM. . Stay, father Thibaut ! Do not join the crowds !  
Here, at this joyous festival you meet  
None but the happy, whom your grief offends.  
Come ! Let us quit the town with hasty steps.

THIB. . Hast thou beheld my child ? My wretched child ?  
Didst thou observe her ?

RAIMOND. I entreat you, stay !

THIB. . Didst mark her tottering and uncertain steps,  
Her countenance, so pallid and disturb'd ?  
She feels her dreadful state ; the hour is come  
To save my child, and I will not neglect it.

[*He is about to retire.*

RAIM . What would you do ?

THIBAUT. Surprise her, hurl her down  
From her vain happiness, and forcibly  
Restore her to the God whom she denies.

RAIM . O do not work the ruin of your child !

THIB . If her soul lives, her mortal part may die.

[JOHANNA *rushes out of the church, without her banner. The people press around her, worship her, and kiss her garments. She is detained in the background by the crowd.*

She comes ! 'tis she ! She rushes from the church.

Her troubled conscience drives her from the fane !

'Tis visibly the judgment of her God !

RAIM . Farewell ! Require not my attendance further !

Hopeful I came, and sorrowful depart.

Your daughter once again I have beheld,

And feel again that she is lost to me !

[*He goes out ; THIBAUT retires on the opposite side.*

### SCENE IX.

JOHANNA, People. Afterwards her Sisters

JOHANNA (*she has freed herself from the crowd and comes forward*).

Remain I cannot—spirits chase me forth !

The organ's peeling tones like thunder sound,

The dome's arch'd roof threatens to o'erwhelm me !

I must escape and seek Heaven's wide expanse !

I left my banner in the sanctuary,

Never, oh never, will I touch it more !

It seem'd to me as if I had beheld

My sisters pass before me like a dream.

'Twas only a delusion !—They, alas !

Are far, far distant—inaccessible—

E'en as my childhood, as mine innocence !

MARGOT (*stepping forward*).

'Tis she ! It is Johanna !

LOUISON (*hastening toward her*). O my sister !

JOHAN. Then it was no delusion—you are here—

Thee I embrace, Louison ! Thee, my Margot !

Here, in this strange and crowded solitude,  
I clasp once more my sisters' faithful breast!

MARG. She knows us still, she is our own kind sister.

JOHAN. Your love hath led you to me here so far!  
So very far! You are not wroth with her  
Who left her home without one parting word!

LOUIS. God's unscen providence conducted thee.

MARG. Thy great renown, which agitates the world,  
Which makes thy name the theme of every tongue,  
Hath in our quiet village waken'd us,  
And led us hither to this festival.  
To witness all thy glory we are come;  
And we are not alone!

JOHANNA (*quickly*). Our father's here?  
Where is he? Why doth he conceal himself?

MARG. Our father is not with us.

JOHANNA. Not with you?  
He will not see me, then! You do not bring  
His blessing for his child?

LOUISON. He knoweth not  
That we are here.

JOHANNA. Not know it! Wherefore not?  
You are embarrass'd, and you do not speak:  
You look upon the ground! Where is our father?

MARG. Since thou hast left—

LOUISON (*making a sign to MARGOT*).  
Margot!

MARGOT. Our father hath  
Become dejected.

JOHANNA. Ah!

LOUISON. Console thyself!  
Our sire's foreboding spirit well thou know'st!  
He will collect himself, and be composed,  
When he shall learn from us that thou art happy  
MARG. And thou art happy? Yes, it must be so,  
For thou art great and honour'd!

JOHANNA. I am so,  
Now I again behold you, once again  
Your voices hear, whose fond familiar tones  
Bring to my mind my dear paternal fields.

When on my native hills I drove my herd,  
Then I was happy as in Paradise—  
I ne'er can be so more, no, never more!

[*She hides her face on LOUISE's bosom. CLAUDE:  
MARIE, ETIENNE, and BERTRAND appear, and  
remain timidly standing in the distance.*

MARG. Come, Bertrand! Claude Marie! come Etienne!  
Our sister is not proud: she is so gentle,  
And speaks so kindly,—more so than of yore,  
When in our village she abode with us.  
[*They draw near, and hold out their hands;  
JOHANNA gazes on them fixedly, and appears  
amazed.*

JOHAN. Where am I? Tell me! Was it all a dream,  
A long, long dream? And am I now awake?  
Am I away from Domremi? Is 't so?  
I fell asleep beneath the Druid tree,  
And I am now awake; and round me stand  
The kind familiar forms? I only dream'd  
Of all these battles, kings, and deeds of war,—  
They were but shadows which before me pass'd;  
For dreams are always vivid 'neath that tree.  
How did you come to Rheims? How came I here?  
No, I have never quitted Domremi!  
Confess it to me, and rejoice my heart.

LOUIS. We are at Rheims. Thou hast not merely dream'd  
Of these great deeds—thou hast achieved them all.  
—Come to thyself, Johanna! Look around—  
Thy splendid armour feel, of burnish'd gold!  
[*JOHANNA lays her hand upon her breast, recollects  
herself, and shrinks back.*

BERT. . Out of my hand thou didst receive this helm.  
MARIE. No wonder thou shouldst think it all a dream;  
For nothing in a dream could come to pass  
More wonderful than what thou hast achieved.

JOHANNA (*quickly*).  
Come, let us fly! I will return with you  
Back to our village, to our father's bosom.

LOUIS. Oh come! Return with us!

JOHANNA. The people here

Exalt me far above what I deserve !

You have beheld me weak and like a child ;

You love me, but you do not worship me !

MARG. Thou wilt abandon this magnificence !

JOHAN. I will throw off the hated ornaments,  
Which were a barrier 'twixt my heart and yours.  
And I will be a shepherdess again,  
And, like a humble maiden, I will serve you,  
And will with bitter penitence atone  
That I above you vainly raised myself !

[*Trumpets sound.*]

SCENE X.

*The KING comes forth from the Church. He is in the coronation robes. AGNES SORFEL, ARCHBISHOP, BURGUNDY, DUNOIS, LA HIRE, DU CHATEL, KNIGHTS, COURTIERS, and PEOPLE.*

*Many voices shout repeatedly, while the KING advances.*

Long live the King ! Long live King Charles the Seventh !

[*The trumpets sound. Upon a signal from the KING, the HERALDS with their staves command silence.*]

KING. . Thanks, my good people ! Thank you for your love !  
The crown, which God hath placed upon our brow,  
Hath with our valiant swords been hardly won :  
With noble blood 'tis wetted ; but henceforth  
The peaceful olive branch shall round it twine.  
Let those who fought for us receive our thanks ;  
Our pardon, those who join'd the hostile ranks,  
For God hath shown us mercy in our need,  
And our first royal word shall now be—Mercy !

PEOPLE. Long live the King ! Long live King Charles the good !

KING. . From God alone, the highest potentate,  
The monarchs of the French receive the crown ;  
But visibly from his almighty hand  
Have we received it. [*Turning to the MAIDEN.*]  
Here stands the holy delegate of Heaven,  
Who hath restored to you your rightful King.  
And rent the yoke of foreign tyranny !  
Her name shall equal that of holy Denis,  
The guardian and protector of this realm ;  
And to her fame an altar shall be rear'd !

PEOPLE. Hail to the Maiden, the deliverer! [Trumpets.  
 KING (to JOHANNA).

If thou art born of woman, like ourselves,  
 Name aught that can augment thy happiness.  
 But if thy Fatherland is there above,  
 If in this virgin form thou dost conceal  
 The radiant glory of a heavenly nature,  
 From our deluded sense remove the veil,  
 And let us see thee in thy form of light,  
 As thou art seen in Heaven, that in the dust  
 We may bow down before thee.

[A general silence; every eye is fixed upon the  
 MAIDEN.

JOHANNA (with a sudden cry).

God! my father!

# SCENE XI.

THIBAUT comes forth from the crowd and stands opposite to her.  
*Many voices exclaim,*

Her father!

THIBAUT. Yes, her miserable father,  
 Who did beget her, and whom God impels  
 Now to accuse his daughter.

BURGUNDY. Ha! What's this?

DUCHAT. Now will the fearful truth appear!

THIBAUT (to the KING). Thou think'st  
 That thou art rescued through the power of God?  
 Deluded prince! Deluded multitude!  
 Ye have been rescued through the arts of Hell.

[All step back with horror.

DUNOIS. Is this man mad?

THIBAUT. Not I, but thou art mad,  
 And this wise bishop, and these noble lords,  
 Who think that through a weak and sinful maid  
 The God of Heaven would reveal himself.  
 Come, let us see, if to her father's face  
 She will maintain the specious, juggling arts,  
 Wherewith she hath deluded King and people.



Now, in the name of the blest Trinity,  
Belong'st thou to the pure and holy ones?

*[A general silence; all eyes are fixed upon her;  
she remains motionless.]*

SOREL. God! she is dumb!

THIBAUT.

Before that awful name,  
Which even in the depths of Hell is fear'd,  
She must be silent!—She a holy one,  
By God commission'd?—On a cursed spot  
It was conceived,—beneath the Druid tree  
Where evil spirits have from olden time  
Their sabbath held.—There her immortal soul  
She barter'd with the enemy of man  
For transient worldly glory. Let her bare  
Her arm, and ye will see impress'd thereon,  
The fatal marks of Hell!

BURGUNDY.

Most horrible!

Yet we must needs believe a father's words,  
Who 'gainst his daughter gives his evidence!

DUNOIS. No, no! the madman cannot be believed,  
Who in his child brings shame upon himself!

SOREL. *(to JOHANNA).*

O, Maiden, speak! this fatal silence break!  
We firmly trust thee! we believe in thee!  
One syllable from thee, one single word,  
Shall be sufficient—speak! annihilate  
This horrid accusation!—But declare  
Thine innocence, and we will all believe thee.

*[JOHANNA remains motionless; AGNES steps back  
with horror.]*

HIIRE. She's frighten'd. Horror and astonishment  
Impede her utterance.—Before a charge  
So horrible e'en innocence must tremble.

*[He approaches her.]*

Collect thyself, Johanna! innocence  
Hath a triumphant look, whose lightning flash  
Strikes slander to the earth! In noble wrath  
Arise! look up, and punish this base doubt,  
An insult to thy holy innocence.

*[JOHANNA remains motionless; LA HIIRE steps  
back; the excitement increases.]*

DUNOIS. Why do the people fear—the princes tremble?  
I'll stake my honour on her innocence!  
Here on the ground I throw my knightly gage—  
Who now will venture to maintain her guilt?

*[A loud clap of thunder; all are horror-struck.]*

THIB. . Answer, by Him whose thunders roll above!  
Give me the lie. Proclaim thine innocence;  
Say that the enemy hath not thy heart!  
*[Another clap of thunder, louder than the first,  
the people fly on all sides.]*

BURG. . God guard and save us! What appalling signs!

DUCHATTEL *(to the KING)*.

Come, come, my King! forsake this fearful place!

ARCHBISHOP *(to JOHANNA)*.

I ask thee in God's name. Art thou thus silent  
From consciousness of innocence or guilt?  
If in thy favour the dread thunder speaks,  
Touch with thy hand this cross and give a sign!

*[JOHANNA remains motionless. More violent  
peals of thunder. The KING, AGNES SORREL,  
the ARCHBISHOP, BURGUNDY, LA HIRE, DU-  
CHATTEL, retire.]*

## SCENE XII.

DUNOIS, JOHANNA.

DUNOIS. Thou art my wife—I have believed in thee  
From the first glance, and I am still unchanged.  
In thee I have more faith than in these signs.  
Than in the thunder's voice, which speaks above.  
In noble anger thou art silent thus;  
Envelop'd in thy holy innocence,  
Thou scornest to refute so base a charge.  
—Still scorn it, maiden, but confide in me;  
I never doubted of thine innocence.  
Speak not one word—only extend thy hand,  
In pledge and token, that thou wilt confide  
In my protection and thine own good cause.

*[He extends his hand to her; she turns from him  
with a convulsive motion; he remains trans-  
fixed with horror.]*

## SCENE XIII.

JOHANNA, DUCHATEL, DUNOIS, *afterwards* RAIMOND.DUCHATEL (*returning*).

Johanna d'Arc! uninjured from the town  
The King permits you to depart. The gates  
Stand open to you. Fear no injury,—  
You are protected by the royal word.  
Come follow me, Dunois!—You cannot here  
Longer abide with honour.—What an issue!

[*He retires. DUNOIS recovers from his stupor, casts one look upon JOHANNA, and retires. She remains standing for a moment quite alone. At length RAIMOND appears; he regards her for a time with silent sorrow, and then approaching takes her hand.*

RAIM. . Embrace this opportunity. The streets  
Are empty now.—Your hand! I will conduct you.

[*On perceiving him, she gives the first sign of consciousness. She gazes on him fixedly, and looks up to Heaven; then taking his hand, she retires.*

## ACT V.

*A wild wood: charcoal-burners' huts in the distance. It is quite dark; violent thunder and lightning; firing heard at intervals.*

## SCENE I.

CHARCOAL-BURNER and his WIFE.

CH. B. This is a fearful storm, the heavens seem  
As they would vent themselves in streams of fire;  
So thick the darkness which usurps the day,  
That one might see the stars. The angry winds  
Bluster and howl like spirits loosed from Hell.  
The firm earth trembles, and the aged elms,  
Groaning, bow down their venerable tops.  
Yet this terrific tumult, o'er our heads,  
Which teacheth gentleness to savage beasts,

So that they seek the shelter of their caves,  
 Appeaseth not the bloody strife of men—  
 Amidst the raging of the wind and storm,  
 At intervals is heard the cannon's roar;  
 So near the hostile armaments approach,  
 The wood alone doth part them; any hour  
 May see them mingle in the shock of battle.

WIFE. . May God protect us then!—Our enemies,  
 Not long ago, were vanquish'd and dispersed.  
 How comes it, that they trouble us again?

CH. B. Because they now no longer fear the King.  
 Since that the Maid turned out to be a witch  
 At Rheims, the devil aideth us no longer,  
 And things have gone against us.

WIFE. . Who comes here?

## SCENE II.

RAIMOND and JOHANNA enter.

RAIM. . See! here are cottages; in them at least  
 We may find shelter from the raging storm.  
 You are not able longer to endure it.  
 Three days already you have wander'd on,  
 Shunning the eye of man—wild herbs and roots  
 Your only nourishment. Come enter in.  
 These are kind-hearted cottagers.

*[The storm subsides; the air grows bright and clear.]*

CHARCOAL-BURNER. . You seem  
 To need refreshment and repose—you're welcome  
 To what our humble roof can offer you!

WIFE. . What has a tender maid to do with arms?  
 Yet truly! these are rude and troublous times,  
 When even women don the coat of mail!  
 The Queen herself, proud Isabel, 'tis said,  
 Appears in armour in the hostile camp;  
 And a young maid, a shepherd's lowly daughter,  
 Has led the armies of our lord the King.

CH. B. What sayest thou? Enter the hut, and bring  
 A goblet of refreshment for the damsel.

*[She enters the hut.]*

RAIMOND (to JOHANNA).

All men, you see, are not so cruel; here  
E'en in the wilderness are gentle hearts.  
Cheer up! the pelting storm hath spent its rage,  
And, beaming peacefully, the sun declines.

CH. B. I fancy, as you travel thus in arms,  
You seek the army of the King.—Take heed!  
Not far remote the English are encamp'd,  
Their troops are roaming idly through the wood

RAIM. . Alas for us! how then can we escape?

CH. B. Stay here till from the town my boy returns,  
He shall conduct you safe by secret paths.  
You need not fear—we know each hidden way.

RAIMOND (to JOHANNA).

Put off your helmet and your coat-of-mail,  
They will not now protect you, but betray.

[JOHANNA shakes her head.

CH. B. The maid seems very sad—hush! who comes here?

### SCENE III.

CHARCOAL-BURNER'S WIFE *comes out of the hut with a bowl.*

A Boy.

WIFE. . It is our boy, whom we expected back.

[To JOHANNA.

Drink, noble maiden! may God bless it to you!

CHARCOAL-BURNER (to his son). \*

Art come, Anet? What news?

[*The boy looks at JOHANNA, who is just raising  
the bowl to her lips; he recognises her, steps  
forward and snatches it from her.*

Boy. O mother! mother!

Whom do you entertain? This is the witch  
Of Orleans!

CHARCOAL-BURNER (and his WIFE).

God be gracious to our souls!

[*They cross themselves and fly.*

### SCENE IV.

RAIMOND, JOHANNA.

JOHANNA (*calmly and gently*).

Thou seest, I am follow'd by the curse,

And all fly from me. Do thou leave me too ;  
Seek safety for thyself.

RAIMOND. I leave thee ! now !  
Alas who then would bear thee company ?

JOHAN. I am not unaccompanied. Thou hast  
Heard the loud thunder rolling o'er my head.  
My destiny conducts me. Do not fear ;  
Without my seeking I shall reach the goal.

RAIM. . And whither wouldst thou go ? Here stand our foes,  
Who have against thee bloody vengeance sworn—  
There stand our people, who have banish'd thee—

JOHAN. Nought will befall me but what Heaven ordains.

RAIM. . Who will provide thee food ? and who protect thee  
From savage beasts, and still more savage men ?  
Who cherish thee in sickness and in grief ?

JOHAN. I know all roots and healing herbs ; my sheep  
Taught me to know the poisonous from the wholesome.  
I understand the movements of the stars,  
And the clouds' flight ; I also hear the sound  
Of hidden springs. Man hath not many wants,  
And nature richly ministers to life.

RAIMOND (*seizing her hand*).

Wilt thou not look within ? Oh wilt thou not  
Repent thy sin, be reconciled to God,  
And to the bosom of the Church return ?

JOHAN. Thou hold'st me guilty of this heavy sin ?

RAIM. . Needs must I—thou didst silently confess—

JOHAN. Thou, who hast followed me in misery,  
The only being who continued true,  
Who claved to me when all the world forsook,  
Thou also hold'st me for a reprobate,  
Who hath renounced her God—

[RAIMOND *is silent*.  
Oh this is hard !

RAIMOND (*in astonishment*).

And thou wert really then no sorceress ?

JOHAN. A sorceress !

RAIMOND. And all these miracles  
Thou hast accomplish'd through the power of God  
And of his holy saints ?

JOHANNA. Through whom besides ?

- RAIM. . And thou wert silent to that fearful charge ?  
Thou speakest now, and yet before the King,  
When words would have avail'd thee, thou wert dumb !
- JOHAN. I silently submitted to the doom  
Which God, my lord and master, o'er me hung
- RAIM. . Thou couldst not to thy father aught reply ?
- JOHAN. Coming from him, methought it came from God ;  
And fatherly the chastisement will prove.
- RAIM. . The heavens themselves bore witness to thy guilt !
- JOHAN. The heavens spoke, and therefore I was silent.
- RAIM. . Thou with one word couldst clear thyself, and hast  
In this unhappy error left the world ?
- JOHAN. . It was no error—'twas the will of Heaven.
- RAIM. . Thou innocently sufferedst this shame,  
And no complaint proceeded from thy lips !  
—I am amazed at thee, I stand o'erwhelm'd.  
My heart is troubled in its inmost depths  
Most gladly I receive the word as truth,  
For to believe thy guilt was hard indeed.  
But could I ever dream a human heart  
Would meet in silence such a fearful doom !
- JOHAN. Should I deserve to be Heaven's messenger,  
Unless the Master's will I blindly honour'd ?  
And I am not so wretched as thou thinkest.  
I feel privation—this in humble life  
Is no misfortune ; I'm a fugitive,—  
But in the waste I learn'd to know myself.  
When honour's dazzling radiance round me shone,  
There was a painful struggle in my breast ;  
I was most wretched, when to all I seem'd  
Most worthy to be envied.—Now my mind  
Is heal'd once more, and this fierce storm in nature,  
Which threaten'd your destruction, was my friend ;  
It purified alike the world and me !  
I feel an inward peace—and, come what may,  
Of no more weakness am I conscious now !
- RAIM. Oh let us hasten ! come, let us proclaim  
Thine innocence aloud to all the world !
- JOHAN. He who sent this delusion will dispel it !  
The fruit of fate falls only when 'tis ripe !  
A day is coming that will clear my name,  
When those who now condemn and banish me,

Will see their error and will weep my doom.

RAIM. . And shall I wait in silence, until chance—

JOHANNA (*gently taking his hand*).

Thy sense is shrouded by an earthly veil.

And dwelleth only on external things.

Mine eye hath gazed on the invisible!

—Without permission from our God no hair

Falls from the head of man.—Seest thou the sun

Declining in the west? So certainly

As morn returneth in her radiant light,

Infallibly the day of truth shall come!

#### SCENE V.

QUEEN ISABEL, *with soldiers, appears in the background.*

ISABEL (*behind the scene*).

This is the way toward the English camp!

RAIM. . Alas! the foe!

[*The soldiers advance, and perceiving JOHANNA fall back in terror.*]

ISABEL. What now obstructs the march?

SOLD. . May God protect us!

ISABEL. Do ye see a spirit?

How! Are ye soldiers? Ye are cowards all!

[*She presses forward, but starts back on beholding the MAIDEN.*]

What do I see!

[*She collects herself quickly and approaches her.*]

Submit thyself! Thou art

My prisoner!

JOHANNA.

I am

[*RAYMOND flies in despair.*]

ISABEL (*to the soldiers*). Lay her in chains!

[*The soldiers timidly approach the MAIDEN: she extends her arms and is chained.*]

Is this the mighty, the terrific one,

Who chased your warriors like a flock of lambs,

Who, powerless now, cannot protect herself?

Doth she work miracles with credulous fools,

And lose her influence when she meets a man?

[*To the MAIDEN.*]

Why didst thou leave the army? Where's Dunois,

Thy knight and thy protector?



JOHANNA

I am banished.

[ISABEL, *stepping back astonished*.

ISABEL. Whatsay'st thou? Thou art banished? By the Dauphin?

JOHAN. Inquire no further! I am in thy power,  
Decide my fate.

ISABEL

Banish'd, because thou hast  
Snatched him from ruin, placed upon his brow  
The crown at Rheims, and made him king of France?  
Banish'd! Therein I recognise my son!  
—Conduct her to the camp, and let the host  
Behold the phantom before whom they trembled!  
She a magician? Her sole magic lies  
In your delusion and your cowardice!  
She is a fool who sacrificed herself  
To save her king, and reapeth for her pains  
A king's reward — Bear her to Lionel.  
The fortune of the French I send him bound;  
I'll follow her anon.

JOHANNA.

To Lionel?

Slay me at once, ere send me unto him.

ISABEL (*to the soldiers*).Obey your orders, soldiers! Bear her hence! [*Exit*.

## SCENE VI.

JOHANNA, SOLDIERS.

JOHANNA (*to the soldiers*).

Ye English, suffer not that I escape  
Alive out of your hands! Revenge yourselves!  
Unsheath your weapons, plunge them in my heart,  
And drag me lifeless to your general's feet!  
Remember, it was I, who slew your heroes,  
Who never showed compassion, who poured forth  
Torrents of English blood, who, from your sons,  
Snatched the sweet pleasure of returning home!  
Take now a bloody vengeance! Murder me!  
I now am in your power; I may perchance  
Not always be so weak.

CONDUCTOR OF THE SOLDIERS. Obey the Queen!

JOHAN. Must I be yet more wretched than I was!

Unpitying Virgin! Heavy is thy hand!

Hast thou completely thrust me from thy favour?

No God appears, no angel shows himself;

Closed are Heaven's portals, miracles have ceased.

[*She follows the SOLDIERS.*]

SCENE VII.

*The French Camp.*

DUNOIS, *between the* ARCHBISHOP *and* DUCHATEL.

ARCH. . Conquer your sullen indignation, Prince!  
Return with us ! Come back unto your King !  
In this emergency abandon not  
The general cause, when we are sorely pressed,  
And stand in need of your heroic arm.

DUNOIS. Why are ye sorely pressed ? Why doth the foe  
Again exalt himself ? all was achieved ;—  
France was triumphant—war was at an end ;—  
The saviour you have banished ; you henceforth  
May save yourselves ; I'll not again behold  
The camp wherein the Maid abideth not.

DUCHAT. Think better of it, Prince ! Dismiss us not  
With such an answer !

DUNOIS. Silence, Duchatel !  
You're hateful to me ; I'll hear nought from you ;  
You were the first who doubted of her truth.

ARCH. . Who had not wavered on that fatal day,  
And been bewildered, when so many signs  
Bore evidence against her ! We were stunned,  
Our hearts were crushed beneath the sudden blow.  
—Who in that hour of dread could weigh the proofs ?  
Our calmer judgment now returns to us,  
We see the Maid, as when she walked with us,  
Nor have we any fault to charge her with.  
We are perplexed ;—we fear that we have done  
A grievous wrong.—The King is penitent,  
The Duke remorseful, comfortless La Hire,  
And every heart doth shroud itself in woe.

DUNOIS. She a deluder ? If celestial truth  
Would clothe herself in a corporeal form,  
She needs must choose the features of the Maiden.  
If purity of heart, faith, innocence,  
Dwell anywhere on earth, upon her lips  
And in her eyes' clear depths they find their home !

ARCH. . May the Almighty, through a miracle,  
Shed light upon this awful mystery,

Which baffles human insight.—Howsoe'er  
 This sad perplexity may be resolved,  
 One of two grievous sins we have committed !  
 Either in fight we have availed ourselves  
 Of hellish arms, or banished hence a saint !  
 And both call down upon this wretched land  
 The vengeance and the punishment of Heaven !

## SCENE VIII.

*The same, a NOBLEMAN, afterwards RAIMOND.*

NOBLE. A shepherd youth inquires after your Highness,  
 He urgently entreats an interview,  
 He says, he cometh from the Maiden—

DUNOIS. Haste !  
 Conduct him hither ! He doth come from her !  
 [The NOBLEMAN opens the door to RAIMOND,  
 DUNOIS hastens to meet him.  
 Where is she ? Where 's the Maid ?

RAIMOND. Hail ! noble Prince !  
 And blessed am I that I find with you  
 This holy man, the shield of the oppressed,  
 The father of the poor and destitute !

DUNOIS. Where is the Maiden ?

ARCH. Speak, my son, inform us !

RAIM. . She is not, sir, a wicked sorceress !  
 To God and all his saints I make appeal.  
 An error blinds the people. You've cast forth  
 God's messenger, you've banished innocence !

DUNOIS. Where is she ?

RAIMOND. I accompanied her flight  
 Towards the wood of Ardennes ; there she hath  
 Revealed to me her spirit's inmost depths  
 In torture I'll expire, and will resign  
 My hopes of everlasting happiness,  
 If she's not guiltless, sir, of every sin !

DUNOIS. The sun in Heaven is not more pure than she !  
 Where is she ? Speak !

RAIMOND. If God hath turned your hearts,  
 Oh hasten, I entreat you—rescue her—  
 She is a prisoner in the English camp.

DUNOIS. A prisoner say you ?

ARCHBISHOP.

Poor unfortunate!

RAIM. . There in the forest as we sought for shelter,  
We were encounter'd by Queen Isabel,  
Who seized and sent her to the English host.  
O from a cruel death deliver her  
Who hath full many a time deliver'd you!

DUNOIS. Sound an alarm! to arms! up! beat the drums.  
Forth to the field! Let France appear in arms!  
The crown and the palladium are at stake!  
Our honour is in pledge! risk blood and life!  
She must be rescued ere the day is done!

[Exit.

*A watch tower—an opening above.*

## SCENE IX.

JOHANNA and LIONEL

FASTOLFE (*entering hastily*).

'The people can no longer be restrain'd.  
With fury they demand the Maiden's death.  
In vain your opposition. Let her die,  
And throw her head down from the battlements!  
Her blood alone will satisfy the host.

ISABEL (*coming in*).

With ladders they begin to scale the walls.  
Appease the angry people! Will you wait  
Till in blind fury they o'erthrow the tower,  
And we beneath its ruins are destroy'd?  
Protect her here you cannot.—Give her up!

LIONEL. Let them storm on! In fury let them rage!

Firm is this castle, and beneath its ruins  
I will be buried ere I yield to them.  
—Johanna, answer me! only be mine,  
And I will shield thee 'gainst a world in arms.

ISABEL. Are you a man?

LIONEL.

Thy friends have cast thee off.

To thy ungrateful country thou dost owe  
Duty and faith no longer. The false cowards  
Who sought thy hand, forsake thee in thy need.  
They for thy honour venture not the fight,  
But I, against my people and 'gainst thine,  
Will be thy champion.—Once thou didst confess

- My life was dear to thee : in combat then  
I stood before thee as thine enemy,—  
Thou hast not now a single friend but me !
- JOHAN. Thou art my people's enemy and mine.  
Between us there can be no fellowship.  
Thee I can never love, but if thy heart  
Cherish affection for me, let it bring  
A blessing on my people.—Lead thy troops  
Far from the borders of my Fatherland ;  
Give up the keys of all the captured towns,  
Restore the booty, set the captives free,  
Send hostages the compact to confirm,  
And peace I offer thee in my King's name.
- ISABEL. Wilt thou, a captive, dictate laws to us ?
- JOHAN. It must be done ; 'tis useless to delay.  
Never, oh never, will this land endure  
The English yoke ; sooner will Franco become  
A mighty sepulchre for England's hosts.  
Fallen in battle are your bravest chiefs.  
Think how you may achieve a safe retreat ;  
Your fame is forfeited, your power is lost.
- ISABEL. Can you endure her raving insolence ?

## SCENE X.

A CAPTAIN *enters hastily*.

- CAPT. . Haste, general ! Prepare the host for battle !  
The French with flying banners come this way,  
Their shining weapons glitter in the vale.
- JOHANNA (*with enthusiasm*).  
My people come this way ! Proud England, now,  
Forth in the field ! now boldly must you fight !
- FASTOL. Deluded woman, moderate your joy !  
You will not see the issue of this day.
- JOHAN. My friends will win the fight and I shall die !  
The gallant heroes need my arm no more.
- LIONEL. These dastard enemies I scorn ! They have  
In twenty battles fled before our arms,  
Ere this heroic Maiden fought for them !  
All the whole nation I despise, save one,  
And this one they have banish'd.—Come, Fastolfe,  
We soon will give them such another day

As that of Poitiers, and of Agincourt.  
Do you remain within the fortress, Queen,  
And guard the Maiden till the fight is o'er.  
I leave for your protection fifty knights.

FASTOL. How! general, shall we march against the foe  
And leave this raging fury in our rear?

JOHAN. What! can a fetter'd woman frighten thee?

LIONEL. Promise, Johanna, not to free thyself!

JOHAN. To free myself is now my only wish.

ISABEL. Bind her with triple chains! I pledge my life  
That she shall not escape.

*[She is bound with heavy chains.]*

LIONEL (to JOHANNA). Thou wilt it so!  
Thou dost compel us! still it rests with thee!  
Renounce the French,—the English banner bear,  
And thou art free, and these rude savage men  
Who now desire thy blood shall do thy will!

FASTOLFE (urgently).

Away, away, my general!

JOHANNA. Spare thy words!  
The French are drawing near.—Defend thyself!

*[Trumpets sound, LIONEL hastens forth]*

FASTOL. You know your duty, Queen! if Fate declares  
Against us, should you see our people fly—

ISABEL (showing a dagger).

Fear not! She shall not live to see our fall.

FASTOLFE (to JOHANNA).

Thou knowest what awaits thee, now implore  
A blessing on the weapons of thy people! *[Exit.]*

## SCENE XI.

ISABEL, JOHANNA, SOLDIERS.

JOHAN. Ay! that I will! no power can hinder me.  
Hark to that sound, the war march of my people!  
How its triumphant notes inspire my heart!  
Ruin to England! victory to France!  
Up, valiant countrymen! The Maid is near:  
She cannot, as of yore, before you bear  
Her banner—she is bound with heavy chains;  
But freely from her prison soars her soul,  
Upon the pinions of your battle song.

ISABEL (*to a SOLDIER*).

Ascend the watch-tower which commands the field,  
And thence report the progress of the fight.

[SOLDIER *ascends*.

JOHAN. Courage, my people! 'Tis the final struggle—  
Another victory, and the foe lies low!

ISABEL What see'st thou?

SOLDIER. They're already in close fight.

A furious warrior, on a Barbary steed,  
In tiger's skin, leads forward the gens d'armes.

JOHAN. That's Count Dunois! on, gallant warrior!  
Conquest goes with thee.

SOLDIER. The Burgundian duke  
Attacks the bridge.

ISABEL. Would that ten hostile spears  
Might his perfidious heart transfix, the traitor!

SOLD. . Lord Fastolfe gallantly opposes him.  
Now they dismount—they combat man to man,  
Our people and the troops of Burgundy.

ISABEL. Behold'st thou not the Dauphin? See'st thou not  
The royal banner wave?

SOLDIER. A cloud of dust  
Shrouds every thing. I can distinguish nought.

JOHAN. Had he my eyes, or stood I there aloft,  
'The smallest speck would not elude my gaze'  
The wild fowl I can number on the wing,  
And mark the falcon in his towering flight.

SOLD. . There is a fearful tumult near the trench;  
The chiefs, it seems, the nobles, combat there.

ISABEL. Still doth our banner wave?

SOLDIER. It proudly floats.

JOHAN. Could I look through the loopholes of the wall,  
I with my glance the battle would control!

SOLD. . Alas! What do I see! Our general's  
Surrounded by the foe!

ISABEL (*points the dagger at JOHANNA*). Die, wretch!

SOLDIER (*quickly*). He's free!

The gallant Fastolfe in the rear attacks  
The enemy—he breaks their serried ranks.

ISABEL (*withdrawing the dagger*).  
There spoke thy angel!

SOLDIER.

Victory! They fly!

ISABEL. Who fly?

SOLDIER.

The French and the Burgundians fly;

The field is cover'd o'er with fugitives.

JOHAN. My God! Thou wilt not thus abandon me!

SOLD. . Yonder they lead a sorely wounded knight;

The people rush to aid him—he's a prince.

ISABEL. One of our country, or a son of France?

SOLD. . They loose his helmet—it is Count Dunois.

JOHANNA (*seizes her fetters with convulsive violence*).

And I am nothing but a fetter'd woman!

SOLD. . Look ~~there~~! Who the azure mantle wears,

Border'd with gold!

JOHANNA.

That is my Lord, the King.

SOLD. . His horse is restive, plunges, rears, and falls—

He struggles hard to extricate himself—

[*JOHANNA accompanies these words with passionate movements.*]

Our troops are pressing on in full career,

They near him, reach him—they surround him now.

JOHAN. Oh, have the heavens above no angels more!

ISABEL (*laughing scornfully*).

Now is the time, Deliverer—now deliver!

JOHANNA (*throws herself upon her knees, and prays with passionate violence*).

Hear me, O God, in my extremity!

In fervent supplication up to Thee,

Up to thy heaven above, I send my soul.

The fragile texture of a spider's web,

As a ship's cable, thou canst render strong;

Easy it is to thine omnipotence

To change these fetters into spiders' webs—

Command it, and these massy chains shall fall,

And these thick walls be rent. Thou, Lord, of old

Didst strengthen Samson, when, chain'd and blind,

He bore the bitter scorn of his proud foes.

Trusting in thee, he seized with mighty power

The pillars of his prison, bow'd himself,

And overthrew the structure.

SOLDIER.

Triumph!

ISABEL.

How?



SOLD. . The King is ta'en.

JOHANNA (*springing up*). Then God be gracious to me!

[*She seizes her chains violently with both hands, and breaks them asunder. At the same moment rushing upon the nearest soldier, she seizes his sword and hurries out. All gaze after her, transfixed with astonishment.*]

## SCENE XII.

*The same, without JOHANNA.*

ISABEL (*after a long pause*).

How was it? Did I dream? Where is she gone?  
How did she break these ponderous iron chains?  
A world could not have made me credit it,  
If I had not beheld it with these eyes.

SOLDIER (*from the tower*).

How? Hath she wings? Hath the wind borne her  
down?

ISABEL. Is she below?

SOLDIER.

She strides amidst the fight:  
Her course outspeeds my sight—Now she is here—  
Now there—I see her everywhere at once!  
—She separates the troops—all yield to her;  
The scatter'd French collect—they form anew!  
—Alas! what do I see! Our people cast  
Their weapons to the ground, our banners sink—

ISABEL. What! Will she snatch from us the victory?

SOLD. . She presses forward, right towards the King.  
She reaches him—she bears him from the fight—  
Lord Fastolfe falls—the general is ta'en!

ISABEL. I'll hear no more. Come down!

SOLD. . Fly, Queen! you will be taken by surprise.  
Arm'd soldiers are advancing tow'rs the tower.

[*He comes down.*]

ISABEL (*drawing her sword*).

Then fight, ye cowards.

## SCENE XIII.

**LA HIRE**, *with soldiers. At his entrance the people of the QUEEN lay down their arms.*

**LA HIRE** (*approaching her respectfully*).

Queen, submit yourself—  
Your knights have yielded—to resist is vain!  
—Accept my proffer'd services. Command  
Where you would be conducted.

**ISABEL.**

Every place  
The same, where I encounter not the Dauphin.  
*[She resigns her sword, and follows him with the soldiers.]*

*The Scene changes to the battle field.*

## SCENE XIV.

*Soldiers with flying banners occupy the background. Before them the KING and the DUKE OF BURGUNDY appear, bearing JOHANNA in their arms; she is mortally wounded, and apparently lifeless. They advance slowly to the front of the stage. AGNES SOREL rushes in.*

**SOREL** (*throwing herself on the bosom of the KING*).

You're free—you live—I have you back again!

**KING.** . Yes, I am free—I am so at this price!

*[Pointing to JOHANNA.]*

**SOREL.** Johanna!—God! she's dying!

**BURGUNDY.**

She is gone!

An angel passeth hence! See, how she lies,  
Easy and tranquil, like a sleeping child!  
The peace of Heaven around her features plays.  
The breath of life no longer heaves her breast.  
But vital warmth still lingers in her hand.

**KING.** . She's gone!—She never will awaken more,  
Her eye will gaze no more on earthly things.  
She soars on high, a spirit glorified,  
She seeth not our grief, our penitence.

**SOREL.** Her eyes unclose—she lives!

**BURGUNDY** (*in astonishment*).

Can she return

Back from the grave, triumphant e'en o'er death?  
She riseth up! She standeth!

JOHANNA (*standing up, and looking round*). Where am I?

BURG. . With thine own people, Maiden—with thy friends!

KING. . Supported by thy friend, and by thy King.

JOHANNA (*after looking at him fixedly for some time*).

No! I am not a sorceress! Indeed

I am not one.

KING.                   Thou 'rt holy, as an angel;

A cloud of error dimm'd our mental sight.

JOHANNA (*gazing round her with a joyful smile*).

And am I really, then, among my friends,

And am no more rejected and despised?

They curse me not—kindly they look on me!

—Yes, all around me now seems clear again!

That is my King!—the banners these of France!

My banner I behold not—where is it?

Without my banner I dare not appear;

To me it was confided by my Lord,

And I before his throne must lay it down;

I there may show it, for I bore it truly.

KING (*averting his face*).

Give her the banner!

[*It is given to her. She stands quite unsupported, the banner in her hand. The heaven is illumined by a rosy light.*]

JOHAN. See you the rainbow yonder in the air?

Its golden portals Heaven doth wide unfold,

Amid the angel choir she radiant stands,

'The eternal Son she claspeth to her breast,

Her arms she stretcheth forth to me in love.

How is it with me? Light clouds bear me up—

My ponderous mail becomes a winged robe;

I mount—I fly—back rolls the dwindling earth—

Brief is the sorrow—endless is the joy!

[*Her banner falls, and she sinks lifeless on the ground. All remain for some time in speechless sorrow. Upon a signal from the KING, all the banners are gently placed over her, so that she is entirely concealed by them.*]



# ON THE USE OF THE CHORUS IN TRAGEDY.

A POETICAL work must vindicate itself:—if the execution be defective, little aid can be derived from commentaries.

On these grounds, I might safely leave the Chorus to be its own advocate, if we had ever seen it presented in an appropriate manner. But it must be remembered that a dramatic composition first assumes the character of a whole by means of representation on the stage. The Poet supplies only the words, to which, in a lyrical tragedy, music and rhythmical motion are essential accessories. It follows, then, that if the Chorus is deprived of accompaniments appealing so powerfully to the senses, it will appear a superfluity in the economy of the drama—a mere hindrance to the development of the plot—destructive to the illusion of the scene, and wearisome to the spectators.

To do justice to the Chorus, more especially if our aims in Poetry be of a grand and elevated character, we must transport ourselves from the actual to a possible stage. It is the privilege of Art to furnish for itself whatever is requisite, and the accidental deficiency of auxiliaries ought not to confine the plastic imagination of the Poet. He aspires to whatever is most dignified, he labours to realise the ideal in his own mind—though in the execution of his purpose he must needs accommodate himself to circumstances.

The assertion so commonly made, that the Public degrades Art, is not well founded. It is the artist that brings the Public to the level of his own conceptions; and, in every age in which Art has gone to decay, it has fallen through its professors. The People need feeling alone, and feeling they possess. They take their station before the curtain with an unvoiced longing, with a multifarious capacity. They bring with them an aptitude for what is highest—they derive the greatest pleasure from what is judicious and true; and if, with these powers of appreciation, they begin to be satisfied with inferior productions, still, if they have once tasted what is excellent, they will, in the end, insist on having it supplied to them.

It is sometimes objected that the Poet may labour according to an Ideal—that the critic may judge from ideas, but that mere executive art is subject to contingencies, and depends for effect on the occasion. Managers will be obstinate; actors are bent on display—the audience is inattentive and unruly. Their object is relaxation, and they are disappointed if mental exertion be required, when they expected only amusement. But if the Theatre be made instrumental towards higher objects, the pleasure of the spectator will not be increased, but ennobled. It will be a diversion, but a poetical one. All Art is dedicated to pleasure, and there can be no higher and worthier end than to make men happy. The true Art is that which provides the

highest degree of pleasure; and this consists in the abandonment of the spirit to the free play of all its faculties.

Every one expects from the imaginative arts a certain emancipation from the bounds of reality: we are willing to give a scope to Fancy, and recreate ourselves with the possible. The man who expects it the least will nevertheless forget his ordinary pursuits, his every-day existence and individuality, and experience delight from uncommon incidents:—if he be of a serious turn of mind, he will acknowledge on the stage that moral government of the world which he fails to discover in real life. But he is, at the same time, perfectly aware that all is an empty show, and that, in a true sense, he is feeding only on dreams. When he returns from the theatre to the world of realities, he is again compressed within its narrow bounds; he is its denizen as before—for it remains what it was, and in him nothing has been changed. What, then, has he gained beyond a momentary illusive pleasure which vanished with the occasion?

It is because a passing recreation is alone desired, that a mere show of truth is thought sufficient. I mean that probability or vraisemblance which is so highly esteemed, but which the commonest workers are able to substitute for the true.

Art has for its object not merely to afford a transient pleasure, to excite to a momentary dream of liberty; its aim is to make us absolutely free; and this it accomplishes by awakening, exercising, and perfecting in us a power to remove to an objective distance the sensible world; (which otherwise only burdens us as rugged matter, and presses us down with a brute influence;) to transform it into the free working of our spirit, and thus acquire a dominion over the material by means of ideas. For the very reason also that true Art requires somewhat of the objective and real, it is not satisfied with a show of truth. It rears its ideal edifice on Truth itself—on the solid and deep foundations of Nature.

But how Art can be at once altogether ideal, yet in the strictest sense real;—how it can entirely leave the actual, and yet harmonize with Nature, is a problem to the multitude:—and hence the distorted views which prevail in regard to poetical and plastic works; for to ordinary judgments these two requisites seem to counteract each other.

It is commonly supposed that one may be attained by the sacrifice of the other:—the result is a failure to arrive at either. One to whom nature has given a true sensibility, but denied the plastic imaginative power, will be a faithful painter of the real; he will adapt casual appearances, but never catch the spirit of Nature. He will only reproduce to us the matter of the world, which, not being our own work, the product of our creative spirit, can never have the beneficent operation of Art, of which the essence is freedom. Serious, indeed, but unpleasing, is the cast of thought with which such an artist and poet dismisses us;—we feel ourselves painfully thrust back into the narrow sphere of reality by means of the very art which ought to have emancipated us. On the other hand, a writer, endowed with a lively fancy, but destitute of warmth and individuality of feeling, will not concern himself in the least about truth; he will sport with the stuff of the world, and endeavour to surprise by whimsical combinations; and as his whole performance is nothing but foam and glitter, he will, it is true, engage the attention for a time, but build up and confirm nothing in the understanding. His playfulness is, like the gravity of the other, thoroughly unpoetical. To string together at

will fantastical images, is not to travel into the realm of the ideal; and the imitative reproduction of the actual cannot be called the representation of nature. Both requisites stand so little in contradiction to each other that they are rather one and the same thing; that Art is only true inasmuch as it altogether forsakes the actual, and becomes purely ideal. Nature herself is an idea of the mind, and is never presented to the senses. She lies under the veil of appearances, but is herself never apparent. To the art of the ideal alone is lent, or rather, absolutely given, the privilege to grasp the spirit of the All, and bind it in a corporeal form.

Yet, in truth, even Art cannot present it to the senses, but by means of her creative power to the imaginative faculty alone; and it is thus that she becomes more true than all reality, and more real than all experience. It follows from these premises that the artist can use no single element taken from reality as he finds it—that his work must be ideal in all its parts, if it be designed to have, as it were, an intrinsic reality, and to harmonize with nature.

What is true of Art and Poetry, in the abstract, holds good as to their various kinds; and we may apply what has been advanced to the subject of tragedy. In this department, it is still necessary to controvert the ordinary notion of the natural, with which poetry is altogether incompatible. A certain ideality has been allowed in painting, though I fear, rather for conventional reasons, than on grounds of conviction; but in dramatic works what is desired is illusion, which, if it could be accomplished by means of the actual, would be, at best, a paltry deception. All the externals of a theatrical representation are opposed to this notion; all is merely a symbol of the real. The day itself in a theatre is an artificial one; the metrical dialogue is itself ideal; yet the conduct of the play must forsooth be real, and the general effect sacrificed to a part. Thus the French, who have utterly misconceived the spirit of the ancients, adopted on their stage the unities of time and place in the most common and empirical sense; as though there were any place but the bare ideal one, or any other time than the mere sequence of the incidents.

By the introduction of a metrical dialogue an important progress has been made towards the poetical Tragedy. A few lyrical dramas have been successful on the stage, and Poetry, by its own living energy, has triumphed over prevailing prejudices. But so long as these erroneous views are entertained little has been done—for it is not enough barely to tolerate as a poetic licence that which, is in truth, the essence of all poetry. The introduction of the Chorus would be the last and decisive step; and if it only served this end, namely, to declare open and honourable warfare against naturalism in art, it would be for us a living wall which Tragedy had drawn around herself, to guard her from contact with the world of reality, and maintain her own ideal soil, her poetical freedom.

It is well known that the Greek tragedy had its origin in the Chorus; and though, in process of time, it became independent, still it may be said that poetically, and in spirit, the Chorus was the source of its existence, and that without these persevering supporters and witnesses of the incident a totally different order of poetry would have grown out of the drama. The abolition of the Chorus, and the debasement of this sensibly powerful organ into the characterless substitute of a confidant, is, by no

means, such an improvement in tragedy as the French, and their imitators, would have it supposed to be.

The old Tragedy, which at first only concerned itself with gods, heroes and kings, introduced the Chorus as an essential accompaniment. The poets found it in nature, and for that reason employed it. It grew out of the poetical aspect of real life. In the new Tragedy it becomes an organ of art which aids in making the poetry prominent. The modern poet no longer finds the Chorus in nature; he must needs create and introduce it poetically; that is, he must resolve on such an adaptation of his story as will admit of its retrocession to those primitive times, and to that simple form of life.

The Chorus thus renders more substantial service to the modern dramatist than to the old poet—and for this reason, that it transforms the commonplace actual world into the old poetical one; that it enables him to dispense with all that is repugnant to poetry, and conducts him back to the most simple, original, and genuine motives of action. The palaces of kings are in these days closed—courts of justice have been transferred from the gates of cities to the interior of buildings; writing has narrowed the province of speech; the people itself—the sensibly living mass—when it does not operate as brute force, has become a part of the civil polity, and thereby an abstract idea in our minds; the deities have returned within the bosoms of mankind. The poet must reopen the palaces—he must place courts of justice beneath the canopy of heaven—restore the gods, reproduce every extraneous which the artificial frame of actual life has abolished—throw aside every factitious influence on the mind or condition of man which impedes the manifestation of his inward nature and primitive character, as the statuary rejects modern costume:—and of all external circumstances adopts nothing but what is palpable in the highest of forms—that of humanity.

But precisely as the painter throws around his figures draperies of ample volume, to fill up the space of his picture richly and gracefully, to arrange its several parts in harmonious masses, to give due play to colour, which charms and refreshes the eye—and at once to envelop human forms in a spiritual veil, and make them visible—so the tragic poet inlays and entwines his rigidly contracted plot and the strong outlines of his characters with a tissue of lyrical magnificence, in which, as in flowing robes of purple, they move freely and nobly, with a sustained dignity and exalted repose.

In a higher organization, the material, or the elementary, need not be visible; the chemical colour vanishes in the finer tints of the imaginative one. The material, however, has its peculiar effect, and may be included in an artistical composition. But it must deserve its place by animation, fulness and harmony, and give value to the ideal forms which it surrounds, instead of stifling them by its weight.

In respect of the pictorial art, this is obvious to ordinary apprehension, yet in poetry likewise, and in the tragical kind, which is our immediate subject, the same doctrine holds good. Whatever fascinates the senses alone, is mere matter, and the rude element of a work of art:—if it take the lead it will inevitably destroy the poetical—which lies at the exact medium between the ideal and the sensible. But man is so constituted that he is ever impatient to pass from what is fanciful to what is common; and reflection must, therefore, have its place even in tragedy. But to merit this place it must, by means of delivery, recover what it wants in actual life; for if the two elements



of poetry, the ideal and the sensible, do not operate with an inward mutuality, they must at least act as allies—or poetry is out of the question. If the balance be not intrinsically perfect, the equipoise can only be maintained by an agitation of both scales.

This is what the Chorus effects in tragedy. It is, in itself, not an individual but a general conception, yet it is represented by a palpable body which appeals to the senses with an imposing grandeur. It forsakes the contracted sphere of the incidents to dilate itself over the past and the future, over distant times and nations, and general humanity, to deduce the grand results of life, and pronounce the lessons of wisdom. But all this it does with the full power of fancy—with a bold lyrical freedom which ascends, as with godlike step, to the topmost height of worldly things; and it effects it in conjunction with the whole sensible influence of melody and rhythm, in tones and movements.

The Chorus thus exercises a purifying influence on tragic poetry, inasmuch as it keeps reflection apart from the incidents, and by this separation arms it with a poetical vigour; as the painter, by means of a rich drapery, changes the ordinary poverty of costume into a charm and an ornament.

But as the painter finds himself obliged to strengthen the tone of colour of the living subject, in order to counterbalance the material influences—so the lyrical effusions of the Chorus impose upon the poet the necessity of a proportionate elevation of his general diction. It is the Chorus alone which entitles the poet to employ this fulness of tone, which at once charms the senses, pervade the spirit and expands the mind. This one giant form on his canvas obliges him to mount all his figures on the cithernus, and thus impart a tragical grandeur to his picture. If the Chorus be taken away, the diction of the tragedy must generally be lowered, or what is now great and majestic will appear forced and overstrained. The old Chorus introduced into the French tragedy would present it in all its poverty, and reduce it to nothing; yet, without doubt, the same accompaniment would impart to Shakspeare's tragedy its true significance.

As the Chorus gives life to the language—so also it gives repose to the action; but it is that beautiful and lofty repose which is the characteristic of a true work of art. For the mind of the spectator ought to maintain its freedom through the most impassioned scenes; it should not be the mere prey of impressions, but calmly and severely detach itself from the emotions which it suffers. The commonplace objection made to the Chorus, that it disturbs the illusion, and blunts the edge of the feelings, is what constitutes its highest recommendation; for it is this blind force of the affections which the true artist deprecates—this illusion is what he disdains to excite. If the strokes which Tragedy inflicts on our bosoms followed without respite—the passion would overpower the action. We should mix ourselves up with the subject matter, and no longer stand above it. It is by holding asunder the different parts, and stepping between the passions with its composing views, that the Chorus restores to us our freedom, which would else be lost in the tempest. The characters of the drama need this intermission in order to collect themselves; for they are no real beings who obey the impulse of the moment, and merely represent individuals—but ideal persons and representatives of their species, who enunciate the deep things of Humanity.

Thus much on my attempt to revive the old Chorus on the tragic stage.

It is true that choruses are not unknown to modern tragedy; but the Chorus of the Greek drama, as I have employed it—the Chorus, as a single ideal person, furthering and accompanying the whole plot—is of an entirely distinct character; and when, in discussion on the Greek tragedy, I hear mention made of choruses, I generally suspect the speaker's ignorance of his subject. In my view the Chorus has never been reproduced since the decline of the old tragedy.

I have divided it into two parts, and represented it in contest with itself; but this occurs where it acts as a real person, and as an unthinking multitude. As Chorus and an ideal person it is always one and entire. I have also several times dispensed with its presence on the stage. For this liberty I have the example of *Æschylus*, the creator of Tragedy, and *Sophocles*, the greatest master of his art.

Another licence it may be more difficult to excuse. I have blended together the Christian Religion and the Pagan Mythology, and introduced recollections of the Moorish superstition. But the scene of the drama is *Messina*—where these three religions either exercised a living influence, or appealed to the senses in monumental remains. Besides, I consider it a privilege of poetry to deal with different religions as a collective whole, in which every thing that bears an individual character, and expresses a peculiar mode of feeling, has its place. Religion itself, the idea of a Divine Power, lies under the veil of all religions; and it must be permitted to the poet to represent it in the form which appears the most appropriate to his subject. J

# THE BRIDE OF MESSINA.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ISABELLA, *Princess of Messina.*

DON MANUEL } *her Sons.*

DON CESAR }

BEATRICE.

DIEGO, *an ancient Servant.*

MESSENGERS.

THE ELDERS OF MESSINA, *mute.*

THE CHORUS, *consisting of the Followers of the two Princes.*

## SCENE I.

*A spacious hall, supported on columns, with entrances on both sides; at the back of the stage a large folding-door leading to a chapel.*

DONNA ISABELLA, *in mourning; the ELDERS OF MESSINA.*

ISAB. . Forth from my silent chamber's deep recesses,  
Grey Fathers of the State, unwillingly  
I come; and, shrinking from your gaze, uplift  
The veil that shades my widowed brows :—the light  
And glory of my days is fled for ever!  
And best in solitude and kindred gloom  
To hide these sable weeds, this grief-worn frame,  
Beseems the mourner's heart. A mighty voice  
Inexorable—duty's stern command,  
Calls me to life again.—

Not twice the moon  
Has filled her orb, since to the tomb ye bore  
My princely spouse, your city's lord, whose arm  
Against a world of envious foes around  
Hurled fierce defiance! Still his spirit lives  
In his heroic sons, their country's pride :—  
Ye marked how sweetly from their childhood's bloom  
They grew in joyous promise to the years  
Of manhood's strength ;—yet in their secret hearts,  
From some mysterious root accurs'd, upsprung  
Unmitigable deadly hate, that spurned  
All kindred ties, all youthful fond affections,

Still ripening with their thoughtful age ;—not mine  
 The sweet accord of family bliss ; tho' each  
 Awoke a mother's rapture ; each alike  
 Smiled at my nourishing breast ! for me alone  
 Yet lives one mutual thought of children's love,  
 In these tempestuous souls dissevered else  
 By mortal strife and thirst of fierce revenge.

While yet their father reigned, his stern control  
 Tamed their hot spirits, and with iron yoke  
 To awful justice bowed their stubborn will :  
 Obedient to his voice, to outward seeming  
 They calmed their wrathful mood, nor in array  
 Ere met, of hostile arms ;—yet unappeased  
 Sat brooding malice in their bosoms' depths ;—  
 They little reck of hidden springs, whose power  
 Can quell the torrent's fury :—Scarce their sire  
 In death had closed his eyes, when, as the spark,  
 That long in smouldering embers sullen lay,  
 Shoots forth a towering flame ;—so unconfined  
 Burst the wild storm of brothers' hate, triumphant  
 O'er nature's holiest bands. Ye saw, my friends,  
 Your country's bleeding wounds, when princely strife  
 Woke discord's maddening fires, and raged her sons  
 In mutual deadly conflict ;—all around  
 Was heard the clash of arms, the din of carnage,  
 And e'en these halls were stained with kindred gore.

Torn was the state with civil rage, this heart  
 With pangs that mothers feel ; alas ! unmindful  
 Of aught but public woes, and pitiless,  
 You sought my widow's chamber—there with taunts  
 And fierce reproaches for your country's ills  
 From that polluted spring of brother's hate  
 Derived, invoked a parent's warning voice !  
 And threatening told of people's discontent  
 And princes' crimes ! “ Ill fated land ! now wasted  
 By thy unnatural sons, ere long the prey  
 Of foeman's sword ! Oh haste,” you cried, “ and end  
 This strife ! bring peace again, or soon Messina  
 Shall bow to other lords.” Your stern decree  
 Prevailed ; this heart, with all a mother's anguish  
 O'erlaboured, owned the weight of public cares.

I flew, and at my children's feet distracted  
A suppliant lay; till to my prayers and tears  
The voice of nature answered in their breasts!

Here in the palace of their sires, unarmed,  
In peaceful guise, Messina shall behold  
The long inveterate foes;—this is the day!  
E'en now I wait the messenger that brings  
The tidings of my sons' approach: be ready  
To give your princes joyful welcome home;  
For dire their strife—so from this glad accord,  
With thousand blessings on our happy land,  
Fair Peace shall smile.

*[The ELDERS retire in silence; she beckons to an old attendant who remains.]*

ISABELLA.

Diego!

DIEGO.

Honoured mistress!

ISAB. Old faithful servant, thou true heart, come near me;  
Sharer of all a mother's woes, be thine  
The sweet communion of her joys:—my treasure  
Shrined in thy heart, my dear and holy secret,  
Shall pierce the envious veil, and shine triumphant  
To cheerful day; too long by harsh decrees,  
Silent and overpowered, affection yet  
Shall utterance find in nature's tones of rapture!  
And this unprisoned heart leap to the embrace  
Of all it holds most dear, returned to glad  
My desolate halls;—

So bend thy aged steps  
To the old cloistered Sanctuary that guards  
The darling of my soul, whose innocence  
To thy true love—(sweet pledge of happier days!)  
Trusting I gave, and asked from fortune's storm  
A resting place and shrine: O in this hour  
Of bliss, the dear reward of all thy cares.  
Give to my longing arms my child again!

*[Trumpets are heard in the distance.]*

Haste! be thy footsteps winged with joy—I hear  
The trumpets blast, that tells in warlike accents,  
My sons are near:—

*[Exit DIEGO. Music is heard in an opposite direction and becomes gradually louder.]*

Messina is awake!

Hark! how the stream of tongues hoarse murmuring  
Rolls on the breeze,—'tis they! my mother's heart  
Feels their approach, and beats with mighty throes  
Responsive to the loud resounding march!  
They come! they come! my children! oh, my children!  
[*Exit.*]

*The CHORUS enters.*

*It consists of two semichoruses which enter at the same time from opposite sides, and after marching round the stage range themselves in rows, each on the side by which it entered. One semichorus consists of young knights, the other of older ones, each has its peculiar costume and ensigns. When the two choruses stand opposite to each other, the march ceases, and the two leaders speak \*.*

*First Chorus (CAJETAN).*

I greet ye, glittering halls  
Of olden time!  
Cradle of kings! Hail! lordly roof,  
In pillared majesty sublime!  
Sheathed be the sword!  
In chains before the portal lies  
The fiend with tresses snake-entwined,  
Fell Discord!—Gently tread the inviolate floor!  
Peace to this royal dome!  
Thus by the Furies' brood we swore,  
And all the dark avenging Deities!

*Second Chorus (BOHEMUND).*

I rage! I burn! and scarce refrain  
To lift the glittering steel on high,  
For lo! the Gorgon-visaged train  
Of the detested foeman nigh:—  
Shall I my swelling heart control?—  
To parley deign—or still in mortal strife  
The tumult of my soul?

\* The first chorus consists of Cajetan, Berengar, Manfred, Tristan, and eight followers of Don Manuel. The second of Bohemund, Roger, Hippolyte, and nine others of the party of Don Caesar.

Dire Sister, guardian of the spot, to thee  
 Awè-struck I bend the knee,  
 Nor dare with arms profane thy deep tranquillity!

*First Chorus (CAJETAN).*

Welcome the peaceful strain!  
 Together we adore the guardian power  
 Of these august abodes!—

Sacred the hour  
 To kindred brotherly ties  
 And reverend holy sympathies;—  
 Our hearts the genial charm shall own,  
 And melt awhile at friendship's soothing tone:—

But when in yonder plain  
 We meet—then peace away!  
 Come gleaming arms, and battle's deadly fray!

*The whole Chorus.*

But when in yonder plain  
 We meet—then peace away!  
 Come gleaming arms, and battle's deadly fray!

*First Chorus (BERINGAR).*

I hate thee not—nor call thee foe,  
 My brother! this our native earth,  
 The land that gave our fathers birth:—  
 Of chiefs behest the slave decreed,  
 The vassal draws the sword at need,  
 For chieftain's rage we strike the blow,  
 For stranger lords our kindred blood must flow.

*Second Chorus (BOHEMUND).*

Hate fires their souls—we ask not why;—  
 At honour's call to fight and die,  
 Boast of the true and brave!  
 Unworthy of a soldier's name  
 Who burns not for his chieftain's fame!

*The whole Chorus.*

Unworthy of a soldier's name  
 Who burns not for his chieftain's fame!

*One of the Chorus (BERENGAR).*

Thus spoke within my bosom's core  
 'The thought—as hitherward I strayed;  
 And pensive 'mid the waving store,  
 I mused, of Autumn's yellow glade:—  
 These gifts of Nature's bounteous reign,—  
 The teeming earth, and golden grain,  
 Yon elms, among whose leaves entwine  
 The tendrils of the clustering vine;—  
 Gay children of our sunny clime,—  
 Region of Spring's eternal prime!—  
 Each charm should woo to love and joy,  
 No cares the dream of bliss annoy,  
 And Pleasure through life's summer day  
 Speed every laughing Hour away.  
 We rage in blood,—O dire disgrace!  
 For this usurping, alien race;  
 From some far distant land they came,  
 Beyond the sun's departing flame.  
 And owned upon our friendly shore  
 'The welcome of our sires of yore.  
 Alas! their sons in thralldom pine,  
 The vassals of this stranger line.

*A second (MANFRED).*

Yes! pleased, on our land, from his azure way,  
 The Sun ever smiles with unclouded ray.  
 But never, fair isle, shall thy sons repose  
 'Mid the sweets which the faithless waves enclose.  
 On their bosom they wafted the corsair bold,  
 With his dreaded barks to our coast of old.  
 For thee was thy dower of beauty vain,  
 'Twas the treasure that lured the spoiler's train.  
 Oh, ne'er from these smiling vales shall rise  
 A sword for our vanquished liberties;  
 'Tis not where the laughing Ceres reigns,  
 And the jocund lord of the flowery plains:—  
 Where the iron lies hid in the mountain cave,  
 Is the cradle of Empire—the home of the brave!

[*The folding-doors at the back of the stage are  
 thrown open. DONNA ISABELLA appears between  
 her sons, DON MANUEL and DON CÉSAR.*



*Both Choruses (CAJFTAN).*

Lift high the notes of praise!

Behold! where like the awakening Sun,

She comes, and from her queenly brow

Shoots glad-inspiring rays.

Mistress, we bend to thee!

*First Chorus.*

Fair is the moon amid the starry quire

That twinkle o'er the sky,

Shining in silvery mild tranquillity;—

The mother with her sons more fair!

See! blooming at her side,

She leads the youthful royal pair;

With gentle grace, and soft maternal pride,

Attempering sweet their manly fire.

*Second Chorus (BERENGAR).*

From this fair stem a beauteous tree

With ever springing boughs shall smile,

And with immortal verdure shade our isle;

Mother of heroes, joy to thee!

Triumphant as the sun thy kingly race

Shall spread from clime to clime,

And give a deathless name to rolling time!

ISABELLA (*comes forward with her Sons*).

Look down! benignant Queen of Heaven, and still

This proud tumultuous heart, that in my breast

Swells with a mother's tide of ecstacy,

As blazoned in these noble youths, my image

More perfect shows;—O blissful hour! the first

That comprehends the fulness of my joy,

When long constrained affection dares to pour

In unison of transport from my heart

Unchecked, a parent's undivided love:

Oh! it was ever one—my sons were twain.

Say—shall I revel in the dream of bliss,

And give my soul to nature's dear emotions

Is this warm pressure of thy brother's hand

A dagger in thy breast?

[To DON MANUEL.

Or when my eyes

Feed on that brow with love's enraptured gaze,

Is it a wrong to thee? [To DON CESAR.

Trembling, I pause,  
Lest e'en affection's breath should wake the fires  
Of slumbering hate.

[After regarding both with inquiring looks.

Speak! In your secret hearts  
What purpose dwells? Is it the ancient feud  
Unreconciled, that in your father's halls  
A moment stilled; beyond the castle gates,  
Where sits infuriate War, and champs the bit—  
Shall rage anew in mortal bloody conflict?

(Chorus (BOHELMUND).

Concord or strife—the Fates' decree  
Is bosomed yet in dark futurity!—  
What comes, we little heed to know.  
Prepared for aught the hour may show!

ISABELLA (looking round).

What mean these arms? this warlike dread array,  
That in the palace of your sires portends  
Some fearful issue? needs a mother's heart  
Outpoured, this rugged witness of her joys?  
Say, in these folding arms shall Treason hide  
The deadly snare?—O these rude pitiless men,  
The ministers of your wrath!—trust not the show  
Of seeming friendship; treachery in their breasts  
Lurks to betray, and long-dissembled hate.  
Ye are a race of other lands; your sires  
Profaned their soil; and ne'er the invader's yoke  
Was easy—never in the vassal's heart  
Languished the hope of sweet revenge;—our sway  
Not rooted in a people's love, but owns  
Allegiance from their fears; with secret joy—  
For conquest's ruthless sword, and thralldom's chains  
From age to age, they wait the atoning hour  
Of princes' downfall:—thus their bards awake  
The patriot strain, and thus from sire to son  
Rehearsed, the old traditionary tale  
Beguiles the winter's night. False is the world,  
My sons, and light are all the specious ties  
By Fancy twined: Friendship—deceitful name!

Its gaudy flowers but deck our summer fortune,  
 To wither at the first rude breath of autumn !  
 So happy to whom Heaven has given a brother ;  
 The friend by nature signed—the true and steadfast !  
 Nature alone is honest—Nature only—  
 When all we trusted strews the wintry shore—  
 On her eternal anchor lies at rest,  
 Nor heeds the tempest's rage.

DON MANUEL.

My mother !

DON CLSAR.

Hear me !

ISABELLA (*taking their hands*).

Be noble, and forget the fancied wrongs  
 Of boyhood's age : more godlike is forgiveness  
 Than victory, and in your father's grave  
 Should sleep the ancient hate —Oh, give your days  
 Renewed henceforth to peace and holy love !

*[She recedes one or two steps, as if to give them  
 space to approach each other. Both fix their  
 eyes on the ground without regarding one another.]*

ISABELLA (*after awaiting for some time, with suppressed emotion,  
 a demonstration on the part of her sons*).

I can no more : my prayers—my tears are vain : —  
 'Tis well ! obey the demon in your hearts !  
 Fulfil your dread intent, and stain with blood  
 The holy altars of our household Gods ;—  
 These halls, that gave you birth, the stage where  
 Murder

Shall hold his festival of mutual carnage  
 Beneath a mother's eye !—then, foot to foot,  
 Close, like the Theban pair, with maddening gripe,  
 And fold each other in a last embrace !  
 Each press with vengeful thrust the dagger home,  
 And "Victory !" be your shriek of death :—Nor then  
 Shall discord rest appeased ; the very flame  
 That lights your funeral pyre, shall tower dis severed  
 In ruddy columns to the skies, and tell  
 With horrid image—"thus they lived and died !"

*[She goes away ; the BROTHERS stand as before.]*

(*Chorus* (CAJETAN).

How have her words with soft control  
 Resistless calmed the tempest of my soul !

No guilt of kindred blood be mine !

Thus with uplifted hands I pray ;

Think, brothers, on the awful day,

And tremble at the wrath divine !

DON CÆSAR (*without taking his eyes from the ground*).

Thou art my elder—peak—without dishonour

I yield to thee.

DON MANUEL. One gracious word, and instant,

My tongue is rival in the strife of love !

DON C. I am the guiltier—weaker—

DON MANUEL. Say not so !

Who doubts thy noble heart, knows thee not well ;

Thy words were prouder, if thy soul were mean.

DON C. It burns indignant at the thought of wrong ;—

But thou—methinks, in passion's fiercest mood,

'Twas aught but scorn that harboured in thy breast.

DON M. Oh ! had I known thy spirit thus to peace

Inclined, what thousand griefs had never torn

A mother's heart !

DON CÆSAR. I find thee just and true :

Men spoke thee proud of soul.

DON MANUEL. The curse of greatness !—

Ears ever open to the babblers' tale.

DON C. Thou art too proud to meanness—I to falsehood !

DON M. We were deceived, betrayed !

DON CÆSAR. The sport of frenzy !

DON M. And said my mother true, false is the world ?

DON C. Believe her, false as air.

DON MANUEL. Give me thy hand !

DON C. And thine be ever next my heart !

[*They stand clasping each other's hands, and regard each other in silence.*]

DON MANUEL. I gaze

Upon thy brow, and still behold my mother

In some dear lineament.

DON CÆSAR. Her image looks

From thine, and wondrous in my bosom wakes

Affection's springs.

DON MANUEL. And is it thou?—that smile

Benignant on thy face?—thy lips that charm

With gracious sounds of love and dear forgiveness ?

DON C. Is this my brother, this the hated foe ?

His mien all gentleness and truth—his voice—  
Whose soft prevailing accents breathe of friendship!

*After a pause.*

DON M. Shall aught divide us?

DON CESAR.

We are one for ever!

*[They rush into each other's arms.]*

1ST CHORUS *(to the Second)*.

Why stand we thus, and coldly gaze,

While Nature's holy transports burn?

No dear embrace of happier days

The pledge—that discord never shall return!

Brothers are they by kindred band;

We own the ties of home and native land.

*[Both CHORUSES embrace.]*

A MESSENGER *enters*.

2ND CHORUS *to DON CESAR (BOHEMUND)*.

Rejoice, my Prince, thy messenger returns—

And mark that beaming smile! the harbinger

Of happy tidings.

MESSENGER.

Health to me, and health

To this delivered state! O sight of bliss,

That lights mine eyes with rapture! I behold—

Their hands in sweet accord entwined—the sons

Of my departed lord—the princely pair

Dissevered late by conflict's hottest rage.

DON C. Yes! from the flames of hate, a new-born Phoenix,

Our love aspires!

MESSENGER.

I bring another joy—

My staff is green with flourishing shoots

DON CESAR *(taking him aside)*.

O, tell me

Thy gladsome message.

MESSENGER.

All is happiness

On this auspicious day,—long sought, the lost one

Is found.

DON CESAR.

Discovered! Oh, where is she? Speak!

MESS. Within Messina's walls she has concealed.

DON MANUEL *(turning to the 1ST SIBYMONS)*.

A ruddy glow mounts in my brother's cheek,

And pleasure dances in his sparkling eye;

Whate'er the spring, with sympathy of love  
My inmost heart partakes his joy.

DON CÆSAR (*to the MESSENGER*). Come, lead me;

Farewell, Don Manuel—to meet again

Enfolded in a mother's arms! I fly

To cares of utmost need. *[He is about to depart.]*

DON MANUEL. Make no delay;

And happiness attend thee!

DON CÆSAR (*after a pause of reflection, he returns*).

How thy looks

Awake my soul to transport! Yes, my brother,

We shall be friends indeed! 'This hour is bright

With glad presage of ever-springing love,

That in the enlivening beam shall flourish fair,

Sweet recompense of wasted years!

DON MANUEL. The blossom

Betokens goodly fruit.

DON CÆSAR. I tear myself

Reluctant from thy arms, but think not less—

If thus I break this festal hour—my heart

Thrills with a holy joy.

DON MANUEL (*with manifest absence of mind*).

Obeys the moment!

Our lives belong to love.

DON CÆSAR. What calls me hence—

DON M. Enough! thou leav'st thy heart.

DON CÆSAR. No envious secret

Shall part us long; soon the last darkening fold

Shall vanish from my breast.

*[Turning to the CHORUS.]*

Attend! For ever

Stilled is our strife; he is my deadliest foe,

Detested as the gates of hell, who dares

To blow the fires of discord:—none may hope

To win my love, that with malicious tales

Encroach upon a brother's ear, and point,

With busy zeal of false officious friendship,

The dart of some rash angry word, escaped

From passion's heat:—it wounds not from the lips,

But swallowed by suspicion's greedy ear,

Like a rank poisonous weed, embittered creeps,

And hangs about the heart with thousand shoots,  
Perplexing Nature's ties

*[He embraces his brother again, and goes away,  
accompanied by the 2ND CHORUS.]*

*Chorus* (CAJETAN). Wondering, my Prince,  
I gaze, for in thy looks some mystery  
Strange-seeming shows : scarce with abstracted mien  
And cold thou answered'st, when with earnest heart  
Thy brother poured the strain of dear affection.  
As in a dream thou stand'st, and lost in thought,  
As tho'—dissevered from its earthly frame—  
Thy spirit roved afar. Not thine the breast  
That deaf to Nature's voice, ne'er owned the throbs  
Of kindred love :—nay more—like one entranced  
In bliss, thou look'st around, and smiles of rapture  
Play on thy cheek

*DON MANUEL.* How shall my lips declare  
'The transports of my swelling heart ' My brother  
Revels in glad surprise, and from his breast  
Instinct with strange new-felt emotions, pours  
The tide of joy, but mine—no hate came with me,  
Forgot the very spring of mutual strife !  
High o'er this earthly sphere, on rapture's wings,  
My spirit floats : and in the azure sea,  
Above—beneath—no track of envious night  
Disturbs the deep serene ! I view these halls,  
And picture to my thoughts the timid joy  
Of my sweet bride, as thro' the palace gates,  
In pride of queenly state, I lead her home.  
She loved alone the loving one, the stranger,  
And little deems that on her beauteous brow  
Messina's prince shall twine the nuptial wreath.  
How sweet, with unexpected pomp of greatness,  
To glad the darling of my soul !—too long  
I brook this dull delay of crowning bliss !  
Her beauty's self, that asks no borrow'd charm,  
Shall shine refulgent, like the diamond's blaze  
That wins new lustre from the circling gold !

*Chorus* (CAJETAN). Long have I marked thee, Prince, with curious eye,  
Foreboding of some mystery deep enshrined

Within thy labouring breast. This day, impatient,  
 Thy lips have burst the seal; and unconstrained  
 Confess a lover's joy;—the gladdening chase,  
 The Olympian coursers, and the falcon's flight,  
 Can charm no more:—soon as the sun declines  
 Beneath the ruddy west, thou hiest thee quick  
 To some sequestered path, of mortal eye  
 Unseen—not one of all our faithful train  
 Companion of thy solitary way.  
 Say, why so long concealed the blissful flame?  
 Stranger to fear—ill-brooked thy princely heart  
 One thought unuttered.

DON MANUEL.

Ever on the wing  
 Is mortal joy;—with silence best we guard  
 The fickle good;—but now, so near the goal  
 Of all my cherished hopes, I dare to speak.  
 To-morrow's sun shall see her mine! no power  
 Of Hell can make us twain! With timid stealth  
 No longer will I creep at dusky eve,  
 To taste the golden fruits of Cupid's tree,  
 And snatch a fearful, fleeting bliss: to-day  
 With bright to-morrow shall be one! So smooth  
 As runs the limpid brook, or silvery sand  
 That marks the flight of time, our lives shall flow  
 In continuity of joy!

*Chorus* (CAJETAN).

Already  
 Our hearts, my Prince, with silent vows have blessed  
 Thy happy love; and now from every tongue,  
 For her—the royal beauteous bride—should sound  
 The glad acclaim; so tell what nook unseen,  
 What deep umbrageous solitude, enshrines  
 The charmer of thy heart? With magic spells  
 Almost I deem she mocks our gaze, for oft  
 In eager chase we scour each rustic path  
 And forest dell; yet not a trace betrayed  
 The lover's haunts, ne'er were the footsteps marked  
 Of this mysterious fair.

DON MANUEL.

The spell is broke!  
 And all shall be revealed: now list my tale:—  
 'Tis five months flown,—my father yet controlled  
 The land, and bowed our necks with iron sway:



Little I knew, but the wild joys of arms,  
And mimic warfare of the chase;—

One day,—

Long had we tracked the boar with zealous toil  
On yonder woody ridge :—it chanced, pursuing  
A snow-white hind, far from your train I roved  
Amid the forest maze ;—the timid beast,  
Along the windings of the narrow vale,  
Thro' rocky cleft and thick-entangled brake,  
Flew onward, scarce a moment lost, nor distant  
Beyond a javelin's throw ; nearer I came not,  
Nor took an aim ; when thro' a garden's gate,  
Sudden she vanished :—from my horse quick spring-

ing,  
I followed :—lo ! the poor scared creature lay  
Stretched at the feet of a young beauteous nun,  
That strove with fond caress of her fair hands  
To still its throbbing heart : wondering, I gazed,  
And motionless—my spear, in act to strike,  
High poised—while she, with her large piteous eyes  
For mercy sued—and thus we stood in silence,  
Regarding one another. . . .

How long the pause

I know not—time itself forgot ;—it seemed  
Eternity of bliss : her glance of sweetness  
Flew to my soul ; and quick the subtle flame  
Pervaded all my heart :—

But what I spoke,

And how this blessed creature answered, none  
May ask ; it floats upon my thought, a dream  
(Of childhood's happy dawn ! Soon as my sense  
Returned, I felt her bosom throb responsive  
To mine,—then fell melodious on my ear  
The sound, as of a convent bell. that called  
To vesper Song ; and like some shadowy vision  
That melts in air—she flitted from my sight—  
And was beheld no more.

*Chorus* (CAJETAN).

Thy story thrills  
My breast with pious awe ! Prince, thou hast robbed  
The sanctuary, and for the bride of Heaven



With promise of a happier time, when all  
Shall be revealed.

*Chorus* (CAJETAN). O say—betokens aught  
The time is near?

DON MANUEL. Not distant far the day  
That to the arms of kindred love once more  
Shall give the long forsaken, orphaned maid—  
Thus with mysterious words the aged man  
Has shadowed oft what most I dread—for aught  
Of change disturbs the soul supremely blest:  
Nay, more; but yesterday his message spoke  
The end of all my joys:—this very dawn,  
He told, should smile auspicious on her fate,  
And light to other scenes:—no precious hour  
Delayed my quick resolves—by night I bore her  
In secret to Messina.

*Chorus* (CAJETAN). Rash the deed  
Of sacrilegious spoil! forgive, my Prince,  
The bold rebuke; thus to unthinking youth  
Old age may speak in friendship's warning voice.

DON M Hard by the convent of the Carmelites,  
In a sequestered garden's tranquil bound,  
And safe from curious eyes, I left her,—hastening  
To meet my brother: trembling there she counts  
The slow-paced hours, nor deems how soon triumphant  
In queenly state, high on the throne of Fame  
Messina shall behold my timid bride.  
For next, encompassed by your knightly train,  
With pomp of greatness in the festal show,  
Her lover's form shall meet her wondering gaze!  
Thus will I lead her to my mother; thus—  
While countless thousands on her passage wait  
Amid the loud acclaim—the royal bride  
Shall reach my palace gates!

*Chorus* (CAJETAN). Command us, Prince,  
We live but to obey!

DON MANUEL. I tore myself  
Reluctant from her arms; my every thought  
Shall still be hers: so come along, my friends,  
To where the turbaned merchant spreads his store  
Of fabrics gold entwrought with curious art;

And all the gathered wealth of eastern climes.  
 First choose the well-formed sandals—meet to guard  
 And grace her delicate feet; then for her robe—  
 The tissue, pure as Etna's snow that lies  
 Nearest the sun—light as the wreathy mist  
 At summer dawn—so playful let it float  
 About her airy limbs. A girdle next,  
 Purple with gold embroidered o'er, to bind  
 With witching grace the tunic that confines  
 Her bosom's swelling charms: of silk the mantle,  
 Gorgeous with like empurpled hues, and fixed  
 With clasp of gold:—remember, too, the bracelets  
 To gird her beauteous arms; nor leave the treasure  
 Of Ocean's pearly deeps and coral caves.  
 About her locks entwine a diadem  
 Of purest gems—the ruby's fiery glow  
 Commingling with the emerald's green. A veil,  
 From her tiara pendent to her feet  
 Like a bright fleecy cloud shall circle round  
 Her slender form: and let a myrtle wreath  
 Crown the enchanting whole!

*Chorus* (CAJETAN). We haste, my Prince,  
 Amid the Bazar's glittering rows, to cull  
 Each rich adornment.

DON MANUEL. From my stables lead  
 A palfrey, milkwhite as the steeds that draw  
 The chariot of the Sun; purple the housings,  
 The bridle sparkling o'er with precious gems,  
 For it shall bear my Queen! Yourselves be ready  
 With trumpet's cheerful clang, in martial train  
 To lead your mistress home: let two attend me,  
 The rest await my quick return; and each  
 Guard well my secret purpose.

*[He goes away accompanied by two of the Chorus.]*

*Chorus* (CAJETAN).

The princely strife is o'er, and say,  
 What sport shall wing the slow-paced hours,  
 And cheat the tedious day?  
 With hope and fear's enlivening zest  
 Disturb the slumber of the breast,

And wake life's dull untroubled sea  
With freshening airs of gay variety.

*(One of the Chorus (MANFRED).)*

Lovely is Peace ! A beauteous boy,  
Couched listless by the rivulet's glassy tide,  
'Mid Nature's tranquil scene,  
He views the lambs that skip with innocent joy,  
And crop the meadow's flowering pride :—  
Then with his flute's enchanting sound,  
He wakes the mountain echoes round,  
Or slumbers in the sunset's ruddy sheen,  
Lulled by the murmuring melody.  
But War for me ! my spirit's treasure,  
Its stern delight, and wilder pleasure :  
I love the peril and the pain,  
And revel in the surge of Fortune's boisterous main !

*A second (BERENGAR).)*

Is there not Love, and beauty's smile  
That lures with soft resistless wile ?  
'Tis thrilling hope ! 'tis rapturous fear !  
'Tis Heaven upon this mortal sphere ;  
When at her feet we bend the knee,  
And own the glance of kindred ecstasy !  
For ever on life's chequered way,  
'Tis Love that tints the darkening hues of care  
With soft benignant ray :  
The mirthful daughter of the wave,  
Celestial Venus ever fair,  
Enchants our happy spring with Fancy's gleam,  
And wakes the airy forms of Passion's golden dream.

*First (MANFRED).)*

To the wild woods away !  
Quick let us follow in the train  
Of her, chaste Huntress of the silver bow ;  
And from the rocks amain  
Track through the forest gloom the bounding roe  
The war God's merry bride,  
The chase recalls the battle's fray,  
And kindles victory's pride :—

Up with the streaks of early morn,  
 We scour with jocund hearts the misty vale,  
 Loud echoing to the cheerful horn—  
 Over mountain—over dale—  
 And every languid sense repair,  
 Bathed in the rushing streams of cold reviving air.

*Second (BERENGAR).*

Or shall we trust the ever-moving sea,  
 The azure Goddess, blithe and free,  
 Whose face, the mirror of the cloudless sky,  
 Lures to her bosom wooingly?  
 Quick let us build on the dancing waves  
 A floating castle gay,  
 And merrily, merrily, swim away!  
 Who ploughs, with venturous keel, the brine  
 Of the ocean chrystalline—  
 His bride is Fortune, the world his own,  
 For him a harvest blooms unsown:—  
 Here, like the wind that swift careers  
 The circling bound of earth and sky,  
 Flits ever changeful Destiny!  
 Of airy Chance 'tis the sportive reign,  
 And Hope ever broods on the boundless main!

*A third (CAJETAN).*

Nor on the watery waste alone  
 Of the tumultuous heaving sea;—  
 On the firm earth that sleeps secure,  
 Based on the pillars of eternity.  
 Say, when shall mortal joy endure?  
 New bodings in my anxious breast,  
 Waked by this sudden friendship, rise;  
 Ne'er would I choose my home of rest  
 On the stilled lava stream, that cold  
 Beneath the mountain lies:—  
 Not thus was Discord's flame controlled—  
 Too deep the rooted hate—too long  
 They brooded in their sullen hearts  
 O'er unforgotten treasured wrong.  
 In warning visions oft dismayed,  
 I read the signs of coming woe;

And now, from this mysterious maid,  
 My bosom tells the dreaded ills shall flow :—  
 Unblest, I deem, the bridal chain  
 Shall knit their secret loves, accurst  
 With holy cloisters' spoil profane.  
 No crooked paths to Virtue lead ;  
 Ill fruit has ever sprung from evil seed !

BERENGAR.

And thus to sad unhallowed rites  
 Of an ill-omened nuptial tie,  
 Too well ye know their father bore  
 A bride of mournful destiny,  
 Torn from his sire, whose awful curse has sped  
 Heaven's vengeance on the impious bed !  
 This fierce unnatural rage atones  
 A parent's crime—decreed by Fate,  
 Their mother's offspring, Strife and Hate !

*The scene changes to a garden opening on the sea.*

BEATRICE (*steps forward from an alcove. She walks to and fro with an agitated air, looking round in every direction. Suddenly she stands still and listens.*).

No ! 'tis not he : 'twas but the playful wind  
 Rustling the pine tops. To his ocean bed  
 The sun declines, and with o'erwearied heart  
 I count the lagging hours : an icy chill  
 Creeps through my frame ; the very solitude  
 And awful silence fright my trembling soul !  
 Where'er I turn, nought meets my gaze—he leaves me  
 Forsaken and alone !—

And like a rushing stream the city's hum  
 Floats on the breeze, and dull the mighty sea  
 Rolls murmuring to the rocks : I shrink to nothing,  
 With horrors compassed round ; and like the leaf,  
 Borne on the autumn blast, am hurried onward  
 Thro' boundless space.—

Alas ! that e'er I left  
 My peaceful cell—no cares, no fond desires  
 Disturbed my breast, unruffled as the stream  
 That glides in sunshine through the verdant mead ;—

H H

Nor poor in joys. Now—on the mighty surge  
Of Fortune, tempest-tossed—the world enfolds me  
With giant arms! Forgot my childhood's ties,  
I listened to the lover's flattering tale—  
Listened, and trusted! From the sacred dome  
Allured—betrayed—for sure some hell-born magic  
Enchained my frenzied sense—I fled with him,  
The invader of Religion's dread abodes!

Where art thou, my beloved? Haste—return—  
With thy dear presence calm my struggling soul!

*[She listens.]*

Hark! the sweet voice! No! 'twas the echoing surge  
That beats upon the shore:—alas! he comes not.  
More faintly, o'er the distant waves, the sun  
Gleams with expiring ray; a deathlike shudder  
Creeps to my heart, and sadder, drearier grows  
E'en desolation's self.

*[She walks to and fro, then listens again.]*

Yes! from the thicket shade

A voice resounds!—'tis he!—the loved one!

No fond illusion mocks my listening ear:

'Tis louder—noarer: to his arms I fly—

To his breast!

*[She rushes with outstretched arms to the extremity of the garden. DON CESAR meets her.]*

DON CESAR. BEATRICE.

BEATRICE (*starting back in horror*).

What do I see?

*[At the same moment the Chorus comes forward.]*

DON CESAR.

Angelic sweetness! fear not.

*[To the Chorus.]*

Retire! your gleaming arms and rude array

Affright the timorous maid.

*[To BEATRICE.]*

Fear nothing!—beauty

And virgin shame are sacred in my eyes.

*[The Chorus steps aside. He approaches and takes her hand.]*

Where hast thou been? for sure some envious power  
Has hid thee from my gaze: long have I sought thee:



E'en from the hour when, 'mid the funeral rites  
 Of the dead Prince, like some angelic vision,  
 Lit with celestial brightness, on my sight  
 'Thou shon'st, no other image in my breast,  
 Waking or dreaming, lives ;—nor to thyself  
 Unknown thy potent spells ; my glance of fire,  
 My faltering accents, and my hand that lay  
 Trembling in thine, bespoke my ecstasy !  
 Aught else with solemn majesty the rite  
 And holy place forbade :—

The bell proclaimed

The awful Sacrifice ! With downcast eyes,  
 And kneeling, I adored :—soon as I rose,  
 And caught with eager gaze thy form again,  
 Sudden it vanished ; yet, with mighty magic  
 Of love enchained, my spirit tracked thy presence ;  
 Nor ever, with unwearied quest, I cease,  
 At palace gates, amid the temple's throng,  
 In secret paths retired, or public scenes,  
 Where beauteous innocence perchance might rove,  
 To mark each passing form—in vain : but, guided  
 By some propitious deity, this day  
 One of my train, with happy vigilance,  
 Espied thee in the neighbouring church.  
 [ BEATRICE, who has stood trembling, with averted  
 eyes, here makes a gesture of terror.

I see thee

Once more ; and may the spirit from this frame  
 Be severed e'er we part ! Now let me snatch  
 This glad auspicious moment, and defy  
 Or chance, or envious demon's power, to shake  
 Henceforth my solid bliss ; here I proclaim thee,  
 Before this listening warlike train, my bride,  
 With pledge of knightly honours !

He shows her to the Chorus.

Who thou art,

I ask not : thou art mine ! But that thy soul  
 And birth are pure alike, one glance informed  
 My inmost heart ; and though thy lot were mean,  
 And poor thy lowly state, yet would I strain thee  
 With rapture to my arms :—no choice remains,

Thou art my love—my wife! Know too, that lifted  
 On fortune's height, I spurn control; my will  
 Can raise thee to the pinnacle of greatness:—  
 Enough my name—I am Don Caesar! None  
 Is nobler in Messina!

[*BEATRICE starts back in amazement. He remarks her agitation, and after a pause continues.*

What a grace  
 Lives in thy soft surprise and modest silence!  
 Yes! gentle humbleness is beauty's crown—  
 The Beautiful for ever hid, and shrinking  
 From its own lustre: but thy spirit needs  
 Repose, for aught of strange—e'en sudden joy—  
 Is terror-fraught. I leave thee—

[*Turning to the Chorus.*

From this hour  
 She is your mistress, and my bride; so teach her,  
 With honours due, to entertain the pomp  
 Of queenly state. I will return with speed,  
 And lead her home as fits Messina's Princess!

[*He goes away.*

*BEATRICE and the Chorus.*

*Chorus (BOHEMUND).*

Fair maiden—hail to thee,  
 'Thou lovely Queen!  
 Thine is the crown, and thine the victory!  
 Of heroes, to a distant age,  
 The blooming mother thou shalt shine,  
 Preserver of this kingly line.

(*ROGER*).

And thrice I bid thee hail,  
 Thou happy fair!  
 Sent in auspicious hour to bless  
 This favoured race—the gods' peculiar care.  
 Here twine the immortal wreaths of Fame,  
 And evermore, from sire to son,  
 Rolls on the sceptered sway,  
 To heirs of old renown, a race of deathless name!

(BOHEMUND).

The household Gods exultingly  
 Thy coming wait;  
 The ancient, honoured Sires,  
 That on the portals frown sedate,  
 Shall smile for thee!  
 There blooming Hebe shall thy steps attend,  
 And golden Victory, that sits  
 By Jove's eternal throne, with waving plumes,  
 For conquest ever spread,  
 To welcome thee from Heaven descend.

(ROGER).

Ne'er from this queenly bright array  
 The crown of beauty fades,—  
 Departing to the realms of day,  
 Each to the next, as good and fair,  
 Extends the zone of feminine grace,  
 And veil of purity:—  
 O happy race!  
 What vision glads my raptured eye!  
 Equal in Nature's blooming pride,  
 I see the mother and the virgin bride.

BEATRICE (*awaking from her reverie*).

O luckless hour!  
 Alas! ill-fated maid!  
 Where shall I fly  
 From these rude warlike men?  
 Lost and betrayed!  
 A shudder o'er me came,  
 When of this race accurst—the brothers twain—  
 Their hands embrued with kindred gore,  
 I heard the dreaded name;  
 Oft told, their strife and serpent hate  
 With terror thrilled my bosom's core:—  
 And now—oh hapless fate!—  
 I tremble, 'mid the rage of discord thrown,  
 Deserted and alone!

[*She runs into the alcove.*]

*Chorus* (BOHEMUND).

Son of the immortal Deities,  
 And blest is he, the Lord of power ;  
 His every joy the world can give ;  
 Of all that mortals prize  
 He culls the flower.

(ROGER).

For him from Ocean's azure caves  
 The diver bears each pearl of purest ray ;  
 Whate'er from Nature's boundless field,  
 Or toil or art has won,  
 Obsequious at his feet we lay ;  
 His choice is ever free ;  
 We bow to chance, and Fortune's blind decree.

(BOHEMUND).

But this of Princes' lot I deem,  
 The crowning treasure, joy supreme—  
 Of love the triumph and the prize,  
 The beauty, star of neighbouring eyes !  
 She blooms for him alone,  
 He calls the fairest maid his own.

(ROGER).

Armed for the deadly fray,  
 The corsair bounds upon the strand,  
 And drags, amid the gloom of night, away,  
 The shrieking captive train,  
 Of wild desires the hapless prey :  
 But ne'er his lawless hands profane  
 The gem—the peerless flower —  
 Whose charms shall deck the Sultan's bower.

(BOHEMUND).

Now haste and watch, with curious eye,  
 These hallowed precincts round,  
 That no presumptuous foot come nigh  
 The secret, solitary ground :  
 Guard well the maiden fair,  
 Your chieftain's brightest jewel owns your care.  
*[The Chorus withdraws to the background.]*

*The scene changes to a chamber in the interior of the palace.*

DONNA ISABELLA *between* DON MANUEL *and* DON CÆSAR.

ISAB. . The long expected festal day is come,  
 My children's hearts are twined in one, as thus  
 I fold their hands. Oh, blissful hour! when first  
 A mother dares to speak in nature's voice,  
 And no rude presence checks the tide of love.  
 'The clang of arms affrights mine ear no more:—  
 And as the owls, ill omened brood of night,  
 From some old shattered homestead's ruined walls,  
 Their ancient reign, fly forth a dusky swarm,  
 Darkening the cheerful day;—when absent long,  
 'The dwellers home return with joyous shouts,  
 To build the pile anew;—so Hate departs  
 With all his grisly train—pale Envy, scowling Malice,  
 And hollow-eyed Suspicion—from our gates,  
 Hoarse murmuring, to the realms of night; while  
 Peace,  
 By Concord and fair Friendship led along,  
 Comes smiling in his place. *[She pauses.*

But not alone  
 This day of joy to each restores a brother;  
 It brings a sister! Wonderstruck you gaze!  
 Yet now the truth, in silence guarded long,  
 Bursts from my soul—attend! I have a daughter!  
 A sister lives, ordained by Heaven to bind ye  
 With ties unknown before.

DON CÆSAR. We have a sister!  
 What hast thou said, my mother?—never told  
 Her being till this hour!

DON MANUEL. In childhood's years,  
 Oft of a sister we have heard, untimely  
 Snatched in her cradle by remorseless death:  
 So ran the tale.

ISABELLA. She lives!

DON CÆSAR. And thou wert silent!

ISAB. . Hear how the seed was sown in early time,  
 That now shall ripen to a joyful harvest.  
 Ye bloomed in boyhood's tender age—e'en then—



'Thus spoke the man of God:—a daughter, sent  
 To knit the warring spirits of my sons  
 In bonds of tender love, should recompense  
 A mother's pains! Deep in my heart I treasured  
 His words, and, reckless of the Pagan Seer,  
 Preserved the blessed child—ordained of Heaven  
 To still your growing strife; sweet pledge of hope  
 And messenger of peace!

DON MANUEL (*embracing his brother*).

There needs no sister  
 To join our hearts—she shall but bind them closer.

ISAB. . In a lone spot obscure, by stranger hands  
 Nurtured, the secret flower has grown—to me  
 Denied the joy to mark each infant charm  
 And opening grace from that sad hour of parting;—  
 These arms ne'er clasp'd my child again!—her sire,  
 To jealousy's corroding fears a prey,  
 And brooding dark suspicion, restless tracked  
 Each day my steps.

DON CESAR. Yet three months flown, my father  
 Sleeps in the tranquil grave; say, whence delayed  
 The joyous tidings?—Why so long concealed  
 The maid, nor earlier taught our hearts to glow  
 With brother's love?

ISABELLA. The cause—your frenzied hate,  
 That raging unconfined, e'en on the tomb  
 Of your scarce buried father, lit the flames  
 Of mortal strife. What! could I throw my daughter  
 Betwixt your gleaming blades? Or 'mid the storm  
 Of passion would ye list a woman's counsels?  
 Could she, sweet pledge of peace, of all our hopes  
 The last and holy anchor, 'mid the rage  
 Of discord find a home? Ye stand as brothers,  
 So will I give a sister to your arms!  
 The reconciling angel comes—each hour  
 I wait my messenger's return; he leads her  
 From her sequestered cell, to glad once more  
 A mother's eyes.

DON MANUEL. Nor her alone this day  
 Thy arms shall fold:—joy pours thro' all our gates;  
 Soon shall the desolate halls be full, the seat

Of every blooming Grace.—Now hear my secret :  
 A sister thou hast given ; to thee I bring  
 A daughter—bless thy son ! My heart has found  
 Its lasting shrine : ere this day's sun has set,  
 Don Manuel to thy feet shall lead his bride,  
 The partner of his days.

ISABELLA. And to my breast  
 With transport will I clasp the chosen maid,  
 That makes my first-born happy ! Joy shall spring  
 Where'er she treads, and every flower that blooms  
 Around the path of life smile in her presence !  
 May bliss reward the son, that for my brows  
 Has twined the choicest wreath a mother wears.

CÆSAR. Yet give not all the fulness of thy blessing  
 To him, thy eldest born. If love be blest,  
 I, too, can give thee joy—I bring a daughter—  
 Another flower for thy most treasured garland !  
 The maid that in this ice-cold bosom first  
 Awoke the rapturous flame ! Ere yonder sun  
 Declines—Don Cæsar's bride shall call thee mother !

DON M. Almighty Love !—thou godlike power—for well  
 We call thee sovereign of the breast ! Thy sway  
 Controls each warring element, and tunes  
 To soft accord ; nought lives but owns thy greatness !  
 Lo ! the rude soul that long defied thee, melts  
 At thy command ! *[He embraces DON CÆSAR.]*

Now I can trust thy heart,  
 And joyful strain thee to a brother's arms !  
 I doubt thy faith no more, for thou canst love !

ISAB. . Thrice blest the day, when every gloomy care  
 From my o'er-laboured breast has flown. I see  
 On steadfast columns reared our kingly race,  
 And with contented spirit track the stream  
 Of measureless time. In these deserted halls,  
 Sad in my widow's veil, but yesterday  
 Childless I, roamed—and soon, in youthful charms  
 Arrayed, three blooming daughters at my side  
 Shall stand ! O happiest mother ! Chief of women,  
 In bliss supreme ; can aught of earthly joy  
 O'erbalance thine ?

But say, of royal stem,



What maidens grace our isle? For ne'er my sons  
Would stoop to meaner brides.

DON MANUEL.                      Seek not to raise  
The veil that hides my bliss; another day  
Shall tell thee all    Enough—Don Manuel's bride  
Is worthy of thy son and thee.

ISABELLA.                      Thy sire  
Speaks in thy words; thus to himself retired  
For ever would he brood o'er counsels dark,  
And cloak his secret purpose;—your delay  
Be short, my son.                      [*Turning to DON CESAR.*  
But thou—some royal maid,  
Daughter of kings, has stirred thy soul to love;  
So speak—her name—

DON CESAR.                      I have no art to veil  
My thoughts with mystery's garb—my spirit free  
And open as my brows; what thou wouldst know  
Concerned me never. Say—what lights above  
Heaven's flaming orb? Himself!—On all the world  
He shines, and with his beaming glory tells  
From light he sprung:—in her pure eyes I gazed,  
I looked into her heart of hearts:—the brightness  
Revealed the pearl. Her race—her name—my  
mother,  
Ask not of me!

ISABELLA.                      My son, explain thy words,  
For, like some voice divine, the sudden charm  
Has thrall'd thy soul: to deeds of rash emprise  
Thy nature prompted, not to fantasies  
Of boyish love:—tell me, what sway'd thy choice?  
Dox C. My choice? my mother! Is it choice when man  
Obeys the might of Destiny, that brings  
The awful hour? I sought no beauteous bride,  
No fond delusion stirred my tranquil breast,  
Still as the house of death; for there, unsought,  
I found the treasure of my soul. Thou know'st  
That, heedless ever of the giddy race,  
I looked on beauty's charms with cold disdain,  
Nor deemed of womankind there lived another  
Like thee—whom my idolatrous fancy deck'd  
With heavenly graces:—



Nor playful Cupid in her cheeks, nor more,  
 The form of peerless grace ;—'twas Beauty's soul,  
 The speaking virtue, modesty inborn,  
 That as with magic spells, impalpable  
 To sense, my being thrall'd. We breathed together  
 The air of Heaven :—enough !—no utterance asked  
 Of words, our spiritual converse ;—in my heart,  
 'Tho' strange, yet with familiar ties inwrought  
 She seemed, and instant spake the thought—'tis she !  
 Or none that lives !

DON MANUEL (*interposing with eagerness*).

That is the sacred fire  
 From Heaven ! The spark of love—that on the soul  
 Bursts like the lightning's flash, and mounts in flame,  
 When kindred bosoms meet ! No choice remains—  
 Who shall resist ? What mortal break the band  
 That Heaven has kuit ?—Brother, my blissful fortune  
 Was echoed in thy tale—well thou hast raised  
 The veil that shadows yet my secret love.

ISAB. . Thus Destiny has marked the wayward course  
 Of my two sons : the mighty torrent sweeps  
 Down from the precipice ; with rage he wears  
 His proper bed, nor heeds the channel traced  
 By art and prudent care. So to the powers,  
 That darkly sway the fortunes of our house,  
 Trembling I yield. One pledge of hope remains ;  
 Great as their birth—their noble souls.

ISABELLA, DON MANUEL, DON CÆSAR.

DIEGO *is seen at the door*.

ISABELLA.

But see,  
 My faithful messenger returns. Come near me,  
 Honest Diego. Quick ! Where is she ? Tell me,  
 Where is my child ? There is no secret here.  
 Oh, speak ! No longer from my eyes conceal her ;  
 Come ! we are ready for the height of joy.

[*She is about to lead him towards the door.*  
 What means this pause ? Thou lingerest—thou art  
 dumb—

Thy looks are terror-fraught—a shudder creeps

Through all my frame—declare thy tidings!—speak!  
Where is she? Where is Beatrice?

*[She is about to rush from the chamber.]*

DON MANUEL *(to himself abstractedly)*. Beatrice!

DIEGO *(holding back the PRINCESS)*. Be still!

ISAB. . Where is she? Anguish tears my breast!

DIEGO. She comes not;

I bring no daughter to thy arms.

ISABELLA. Declare

Thy message! Speak! by all the Saints!

What has befallen?

DON MANUEL. Where is my sister? Tell us,

Thou harbinger of ill!

DIEGO. The maid is stolen

By corsairs! lost! Oh! that I ne'er had seen

This day of woe!

DON MANUEL. Compose thyself, my mother!

DON C. Be calm; list all his tale.

DIEGO. At thy command

I sought in haste the well-known path that leads  
To the old Sanctuary:—Joy winged my footsteps;  
The journey was my last!

DON CÆSAR. Be brief!

DON MANUEL. Proceed!

DIEGO. Soon as I trode the convent's court—impatient—

I ask—"Where is thy daughter?" Terror sat

In every eye; and straight, with horror mute,

I hear the worst.

*[ISABELLA sinks, pale and trembling, upon a chair; DON MANUEL is busied about her.]*

DON CÆSAR. Say'st thou by pirates stolen?

Who saw the band?—what tongue relates the spoil?

DIEGO. Not far a Moorish galley was descried,

At anchor in the bay—

DON CÆSAR. The refuge oft

From tempests' rage; where is the bark?

DIEGO. At dawn,

With favouring breeze she stood to sea.

DON CÆSAR. But never

One prey contents the Moor; say, have they told  
Of other spoil?

- DIEGO. A herd that pastured near  
Was dragged away.
- DON CESAR. Yet from the convent's bound  
How tear the maid unseen?
- DIEGO. 'Tis thought, with ladders,  
They scaled the wall.
- DON CESAR. Thou know'st what jealous care  
Enshrines the bride of Heaven; scarce could their  
steps  
Invade the secret cells.
- DIEGO. Bound by no vows,  
The maiden roved at will; oft would she seek,  
Alone, the garden's shade. Alas! this day,  
Ne'er to return!
- DON CESAR. Said'st thou—the prize of corsairs?—  
Perchance, at other bidding, she forsook  
The sheltering domo—
- ISABELLA (*rising suddenly*). 'Twas force! 'twas savage spoil!  
Ne'er has my child, reckless of honour's ties,  
With vile seducer fled! My sons! Awake!  
I thought to give a sister to your arms;  
I ask a daughter from your swords! Arise!  
Avenge this wrong! To arms! Launch every ship!  
Scour all our coasts! From sea to sea pursue them!  
O bring my daughter—haste!
- DON CESAR. Farewell—I fly  
To vengeance! [*He goes away.*]
- [DON MANUEL *arouses himself from a state of abstraction, and turns, with an air of agitation, to DIEGO.*]
- DON MANUEL. Speak! within the convent's walls  
When first unseen—
- DIEGO. This day at dawn.
- DON MANUEL (*to ISABELLA*). Her name,  
Thou say'st, is Beatrice?
- ISABELLA. No questions! Fly!
- DON M. Yet tell me—
- ISABELLA. Haste! Begone! Why this delay?—  
Follow thy brother.
- DON MANUEL. I conjure thee—speak—

ISABELLA (*dragging him away*).

Behold my tears !

DON MANUEL. Where was she hid ? What region  
Concealed my sister ?

ISABELLA. Scarce from curious eyes,  
In the deep bosom of the earth more safe  
My child had been !

DIEGO. Oh ! now a sudden horror  
Starts in my breast.

DON MANUEL. What gives thee fear ?

DIEGO. 'Twas I  
That guiltless caused this woe !

ISABELLA. Unhappy man !  
What hast thou done ?

DIEGO. To spare thy mother's heart  
One anxious pang, my mistress, I concealed  
What now my lips shall tell :—'Twas on the day  
When thy dead husband in the silent tomb  
Was laid ; from every side the unnumbered throng  
Pressed eager to the solemn rites ; thy daughter—  
For e'en amid the cloistered shade was noised  
The funeral pomp—urged me, with ceaseless prayer,  
To lead her to the festival of Death.  
In evil hour I gave consent ; and, shrouded  
In sable weeds of mourning, she surveyed  
Her father's obsequies. With keen reproach  
My bosom tells—(for through the veil her charms  
Resistless shone)—'twas there, perchance, the spoiler  
Lurked to betray.

DON MANUEL (*to himself*). Thrice happy words ! I live !  
It was another !

ISABELLA (*to DIEGO*). Faithless ! Ill betide  
Thy treacherous age !

DIEGO. Oh, never have I strayed  
From duty's path ! My mistress, in her prayers,  
I heard the voice of Nature ;—thus from Heaven  
Ordained, methought, the secret impulse moves  
Of kindred blood, to hallow with her tears  
A father's grave : the tender office owned  
Thy servant's care, and thus with good intent  
I wrought but ill.

DON MANUEL (*to himself*). Why stand I thus, a prey  
To torturing fears! No longer will I bear  
The dread suspense—I will know all!

DON CÆSAR (*who returns*). Forgive me,  
I follow thee.

DON MANUEL. Away! Let no man follow! (*Exit.*)

DON CÆSAR (*looking after him in surprise*).  
What means my brother? Speak—

ISABELLA In wonder lost  
I gaze; some mystery lurks—

DON CÆSAR. Thou mark'st, my mother,  
My quick return; with eager zeal I flew  
At thy command, nor asked one trace to guide  
My footsteps to thy daughter. Whence was torn  
Thy treasure? Say, what cloistered solitude  
Enshrined the beauteous maid?

ISABELLA. 'Tis consecrate  
To St. Cecilia; deep in forest shades,  
Beyond the woody ridge that slowly climbs  
Towards Etna's towering throne, it seems a refuge  
Of parted souls!

DON CÆSAR. Have courage, trust thy sons;  
She shall be thine, tho' with unwearied quest  
O'er every land and sea I track her presence  
To earth's extremest bounds: one thought alone  
Disturbs,—in stranger hands my timorous bride  
Waits my return; to thy protecting arms  
I give the pledge of all my joy! She comes;  
Soon on her faithful bosom thou shalt rest,  
In sweet oblivion of thy cares. (*Exit.*)

ISAB. When will the ancient curse be stilled, that weighs  
Upon our house? Some mocking demon sports  
With every new-formed hope, nor envious leaves  
One hour of joy. So near the haven smiled—  
So smooth the treacherous main—secure I deemed  
My happiness: the storm was lulled; and bright  
In evening's lustre gleamed the sunny shore:  
Then thro' the placid air the tempest sweeps,  
And bears me to the roaring surge again!  
[*She goes into the interior of the palace, followed  
by DIEGO.*]

*The Scene changes to the Garden.*

*Both Choruses, afterwards BEATRICE.*

*The Chorus of DON MANUEL enters in solemn procession, adorned with garlands, and bearing the bridal ornaments above mentioned. The Chorus of DON CÆSAR opposes their entrance.*

*First Chorus (CAJETAN).*

• Begone!

*Second Chorus (BOHEMUND).*

Not at thy bidding!

CAJETAN.

See'st thou not

Thy presence irks?

BOHEMUND.

Thou hast it, then, the longer!

CAJET. My place is here! What arm repels me?

BOHEMUND.

Mine?

CAJET. Don Manuel sent me hither.

BOHEMUND.

I obey

My Lord, Don Cæsar.

CAJETAN.

To the eldest born

Thy master reverence owes.

BOHEMUND.

The world belongs

To him that wins!

CAJETAN.

Unmannered knave, give place!

BOHEM. Our swords be measured first!

CAJETAN.

I find thee ever

A serpent in my path.

BOHEMUND.

Where'er I list,

Thus will I meet thee!

CAJETAN.

Say, why cam'st thou hither

To spy——?

BOHEMUND.

And thou to question and command?

CAJET. To parley I disdain!

BOHEMUND.

Too much I grace thee

By words!

CAJETAN.

Thy hot impetuous youth should bow

To reverend age.

BOHEMUND.

Elder thou art—not braver.

BEATRICE (*rushing from her place of concealment*).

Alas! What mean these warlike men?



CAJETAN (*to BOHEMUND*). I heed not  
Thy threats and lofty mien.  
BOHEMUND. I serve a master  
Better than thine.  
BEATRICE. Alas! Should he appear!  
CAJET. Thou liest! Don Manuel thousandfold excels.  
BOHEM. In every strife the wreath of victory decks  
Don Cæsar's brows!  
BEATRICE. Now he will come! Already  
The hour is past!  
CAJETAN. 'Tis peace, or thou shouldst know  
My vengeance!  
BOHEMUND. Fear, not peace, thy arm refrains.  
BEAT. Oh! Were he thousand miles remote!  
CAJETAN. Thy looks  
But move my scorn; the compact I obey.  
BOHEM. The coward's ready shield!  
CAJETAN. Come on! I follow.  
BOHEM. To arms!  
BEATRICE (*in the greatest agitation*).  
Their falcions gleam—the strife begins!  
Ye heavenly powers, his steps refrain! Some snare  
Throw round his feet, that in this hour of dread  
He come not: all ye angels, late implored  
To give him to my arms, reverse my prayers;  
Far, far from hence convey the loved one!  
[*She runs into the alcove. At the moment when  
the two Chorus are about to engage, DON  
MANUEL appears.*]

DON MANUEL, *the Chorus.*

DON MANUEL. Hold!  
What do I see!  
*First Chorus to the Second* (CAJETAN, BERENGAR, MANFRED).  
Come on! Come on!  
*Second Chorus* (BOHEMUND, ROGER, HIPPOLYTE).  
Down with them!  
DON MANUEL (*stepping between them with drawn sword*).  
Hold!  
CAJETAN. 'Tis the Prince!

BOHEMUND.

Be still !

DON MANUEL.

I stretch him dead

Upon this verdant turf, that with one glance  
 Of scorn prolongs the strife, or threats his foe !  
 Why rage ye thus ? What maddening fiend impels  
 To blow the flames of ancient hate anew,  
 For ever reconciled ? Say, who began  
 The conflict ?—Speak—

*First Chorus* (CAJETAN, BERENGAR).

My Prince, we stood—

*Second Chorus* (ROGER, BOHEMUND) *interrupting them.*

They came—

DON MANUEL (*to the First Chorus*).

Speak thou !

*First Chorus* (CAJETAN).

With wreaths adorned, in festal train,  
 We bore the bridal gifts ; no thought of ill  
 Disturbed our peaceful way ; composed for ever  
 With holy pledge of love we deemed your strife,  
 And trusting came ; when here in rude array  
 Of arms encamped they stood, and loud defied us !

DON M. Slave ! Is no refuge safe ? Shall discord thus  
 Profane the bower of virgin innocence,  
 The home of sanctity and peace ?

*[To the Second Chorus.*

Retire—

Your warlike presence ill beseems ; away !

I would be private.

*[They hesitate.*

In your master's name  
 I give command ; our souls are one, our lips  
 Declare each other's thoughts ; begone !

*[To the First Chorus.*

Remain—

And guard the entrance.

BOHEMUND.

So ! What next ? Our masters

Are reconciled ; that's plain ; and less he wins  
 Of thanks than peril, that with busy zeal  
 In princely quarrel stirs ; for when of strife  
 His Mightiness weary feels, of guilt  
 He throws the red-dyed mantle unconcerned  
 On his poor follower's luckless head, and stands

Arrayed in virtue's robes! So let them end  
 E'en as they will their brawls, I hold it best  
 That we obey.

*[Exit Second Chorus. The First withdraws to the back of the Stage; at the same moment BEATRICE rushes forward, and throws herself into DON MANUEL's arms.]*

BEATRICE. 'Tis thou! Ah! cruel one,  
 Again I see thee—clasp thee—long appalled,  
 To thousand ills a prey, trembling I languish  
 For thy return: no more—in thy loved arms  
 I am at peace, nor think of dangers past,  
 Thy breast my shield from every threatening harm.  
 Quick! Let us fly! They see us not—away!  
 Nor lose the moment.

Ha! Thy looks affright me!  
 Thy sullen cold reserve! Thou tear'st thyself  
 Impatient from my circling arms, I know thee  
 No more! Is this Don Manuel? My beloved?  
 My husband?

DON MANUEL. Beatrice!

BEATRICE. No words! The moment  
 Is precious! Haste.

DON MANUEL. Yet tell me—

BEATRICE. Quick! Away

Ere those fierce men return.

DON MANUEL. Be calm, for nought

Shall trouble thee of ill.

BEATRICE. Oh fly!—alas,

Thou know'st them not!

DON MANUEL. Protected by this arm,

Canst thou fear aught?

BEATRICE. Oh! trust me; mighty men

Are here.

DON MANUEL. Beloved! mightier none than me!

BEAT. . And wouldst thou brave this warlike host alone?

DON M. Alone! the men thou fear'st—

BEATRICE. Thou know'st them not,

Nor whom they serve.

DON MANUEL. Myself! I am their Lord!

BEAT. . Thou art—a shudder creeps thro' all my frame!

DON M. Far other than I seemed ; so learn at last  
To know me, Beatrice. Not the poor knight  
Am I, the stranger and unknown, that loving  
Taught thee to love ; but what I am—my race—  
My power—

BEATRICE. And art thou not Don Manuel ? Speak—  
Who art thou ?

DON MANUEL. Chief of all that bear the name,  
I am Don Manuel, Prince of Messina !

BEAT. . Art thou Don Manuel, Don Cæsar's brother ?

DON M. Don Cæsar is my brother.

BEATRICE. Is thy brother !

DON M. What means this terror ? Know'st thou, then, Don  
Cæsar ?

None other of my race ?

BEATRICE. Art thou Don Manuel,  
That with thy brother liv'st in bitter strife  
Of long inveterate hate ?

DON MANUEL. This very sun  
Smiled on our glad accord ! Yes, we are brothers !  
Brothers in heart !

BEATRICE. And reconciled ? This day ?

DON M. What stirs this wild disorder ? Hast thou known  
Aught but our name ? Say, hast thou told me all ?  
Is there no secret ? Hast thou nought concealed ?  
Nothing disguised ?

BEATRICE. Thy words are dark ; explain,  
What shall I tell thee ?

DON MANUEL. Of thy mother nought  
Hast thou e'er told ; who is she ? If in words  
I paint her, bring her to thy sight—

BEATRICE. Thou know'st her !  
And thou wert silent !

DON MANUEL. If I know thy mother,  
Horrors betide us both !

BEATRICE. Oh ! she is gracious  
As the sun's orient beam ! Yes ! I behold her ;  
Fond memory wakes ;—and from my bosom's depths  
Her godlike presence rises to my view !  
I see around her snowy neck descend  
The tresses of her raven hair, that shade

The form of sculptured loveliness ; I see  
 The pale, high-thoughted brow ; the darkening glance  
 Of her large lustrous orbs ; I hear the tones  
 Of soul-fraught sweetness !

DON MANUEL.

'Tis herself !

BEATRICE.

This day,

Perchance had given me to her arms, and knit  
 Our souls in everlasting love ;—such bliss  
 I have renounced, yes ! I have lost a mother  
 For thee !

DON MANUEL.

Console thyself, Messina's Princess  
 Henceforth shall call thee daughter ; to her feet  
 I lead thee ; come—she waits.

BEATRICE.

What hast thou said ?

Thy mother and Don Cæsar's ? Never ! never !

DON M. Thou shudderest ! Whence this horror ? Hast thou  
 known

My mother ? Speak—

BEATRICE.

O grief ! O dire misfortune !

Alas ! that e'er I live to see this day !

DON M. What troubles thee ? Thou know'st me, thou hast  
 found,

In the poor stranger knight, Messina's Prince.

BEAT. . Give me the dear unknown again ! With him,  
 On Earth's remotest wilds I could be blest !

DON CÆSAR (*behind the scene*).

Away ! What rabble throng is here ?

BEATRICE.

That voice !

Oh heavens ! Where shall I fly !

DON MANUEL.

Know'st thou that voice ?

No ! thou hast never heard it ; to thine ear

'Tis strange—

BEATRICE.

Oh, come—delay not—

DON MANUEL.

Wherefore fly ?

It is my brother's voice ! He seeks me—how

He tracked my steps—

BEATRICE.

By all the holy Saints !

Brave not his wrath ! oh quit this place—avoid him—

Meet not thy brother here !

DON MANUEL.

My soul ! thy fears



Breathed my immortal hate! Down, down to Hell,  
Thou soul of falsehood!

[*He stabs him, DON MANUEL falls.*

DON MANUEL.

Beatrice!—my brother!—

I die!

[*Dies. BEATRICE sinks lifeless at his side.*

*First Chorus* (CAJETAN).

Help! Help! To arms! Avenge with blood  
The bloody deed!

*Second Chorus* (BOHEMUND). The fortune of the day  
Is ours! The strife for ever stilled:—Messina  
Obeys one Lord.

*First Chorus* (CAJETAN, BERENGAR, MANFRED).

Revenge! The murderer  
Shall die! Quick offer to your master's shade  
Appeasing sacrifice!

*Second Chorus* (BOHEMUND, ROGER, HIPPOLYTE).

My Prince! fear nothing,

Thy friends are true.

DON CÆSAR (*steps between them, looking around*).

Be still! The foe is slain  
That practised on my trusting honest heart  
With snares of brother's love! O direful shows  
The deed of death! But righteous Heaven hath judged.

*First Chorus* (CAJETAN).

Alas to thee, Messina! Wo for ever!  
Sad city! From thy blood-stained walls this deed  
Of nameless horror taints the skies: ill fare  
Thy mothers and thy children, youth and age,  
And offspring yet unborn!

DON CÆSAR.

Too late your grief—

Here give your help.

[*Pointing to BEATRICE.*

Call her to life, and quick

Depart this scene of terror and of death.

I must away and seek my sister:—Hence!

Conduct her to my mother—

And tell her that her son, Don Cæsar, sends her!

[*Exit.*

[*The senseless BEATRICE is placed on a litter and  
carried away by the Second Chorus. The*

*First Chorus remains with the body, round which the boys who bear the bridal presents range themselves in a semicircle.*

*Chorus (CAJETAN).*

List, how with dreaded mystery  
Was signed to my prophetic soul,  
Of kindred blood the dire decree :—  
Hither with noiseless giant stride  
I saw the hideous Fiend of terror glide !  
'Tis past !—I strive not to control,  
My shuddering awe—so swift of ill  
The Fates the warning sign fulfil.  
Lo ! to my sense dismayed,  
Sudden the deed of death has shown  
Whate'er my boding fears portrayed :  
The visioned thought was pain ;  
The present horror curdles every vein !

*One of the Chorus (MANFRED).*

Sound, sound the plaint of wo !  
Beautiful Youth !  
Outstretched and pale he lies,  
Untimely cropped in early bloom ;  
The heavy night of death has sealed his eyes ;—  
In this glad hour of nuptial joy,  
Snatched by relentless doom,  
He sleeps—while, echoing to the sky,  
Of sorrow bursts the loud despairing cry !

*A second (CAJETAN).*

We come, we come, in festal pride,  
To greet the beauteous Bride ;  
Behold ! the nuptial gifts, the rich attire :  
The banquet waits, the guests are there ;  
They bid thee to the solemn rite  
Of Hymen quick repair.  
Thou hear'st them not—the sportive lyre,  
The frolic dance, shall ne'er invite ;  
Nor wake thee from thy lowly bed,  
For deep the slumber of the dead !



*The whole Chorus.*

No more the echoing horn shall cheer,  
 Nor bride with tones of sweetness charm his ear ;  
 On the cold earth he lies,  
 In death's eternal slumber closed his eyes.

*A third (CAJETAN).*

What are the hopes, and fond desires  
 Of mortals' transitory race ?  
 This day, with harmony of voice and soul,  
 Ye woke the long-extinguished fires  
 Of brothers' love—yon flaming orb  
 Lit with his earliest beams your dear embrace :  
 At eve, upon the gory sand  
 Thou liest—a roeking corse !  
 Stretched by a brother's murderous hand.  
 Vain projects, treacherous hopes,  
 Child of the fleeting hour, are thine ;  
 Fond man ! thou rear'st on dust each bold design.

*Chorus (BRENKAR).*

To thy mother I will bear  
 The burden of unutterable wo !  
 Quick shall yon cypress, blooming fair,  
 Bend to the axe's murderous blow.  
 Then twine the mournful bier !  
 For ne'er with verdant life the tree shall smile  
 That grew on death's devoted soil ;  
 Ne'er in the breeze the branches play,  
 Nor shade the wanderer in the noontide ray ;  
 'Twas marked to bear the fruits of doom,  
 Cursed to the service of the tomb.

*First (CAJETAN).*

Wo to the murderer ! Wo !  
 That sped exulting in his pride,  
 Behold ! the parched earth drinks the crimson tide ;  
 Down, down it flows, unceasingly,  
 To the dim caverned halls below,  
 Where throned in kindred gloom the sister train,  
 Of Themis progeny severe,  
 Brood in their songless silent reign !

Stern ministers of wrath's decree,  
 They catch in swarthy cups thy streaming gore,  
 And pledge with horrid rites for vengeance evermore!

*Second (BERENGAR).*

Tho' swift of deeds the traces fade  
 From earth, before the enlivening ray ;  
 As o'er the brow the transient shade  
 Of thought, the hues of fancy flit away :—  
 Yet in the mystic womb unseen,  
 Of the dark ruling Hours that sway  
 Our mortal lot, what'er *has been*,  
 With new creative germ defies decay.  
 The blooming field is time,  
 For Nature's ever-teeming shoot,  
 And all is seed, and all is fruit.

*[The Chorus goes away, bearing the corpse of  
 DON MANUEL on a bier.]*

SCENE.—*The Hall of Pillars. It is night.*

*The stage is lighted from above by a single large lamp.*

DONNA ISABELLA and DIEGO advance to the front.

ISAB. . As yet no joyful tidings, not a trace  
 Found of the lost one !

DIEGO.                    Nothing have we heard,  
 My mistress ; yet o'er every track, unwearied,  
 Thy sons pursue. Ere long the rescued maid  
 Shall smile at dangers past.

ISABELLA.                    Alas ! Diego,  
 My heart is sad ; 'twas I that caused this wo !

DIEGO. Vex not thy anxious bosom ; nought escaped  
 Thy thoughtful care.

ISABELLA.                    Oh ! had I earlier shown  
 The hidden treasure !

DIEGO.                    Prudent were thy counsels,  
 Wisely thou left'st her in retirement's shade ;  
 So, trust in Heaven.

ISABELLA.                    Alas ! no joy is perfect—  
 Without this chance of ill my bliss were pure.

DIEGO. Thy happiness is but delayed ; enjoy  
The concord of thy sons.

ISABELLA. The sight was rapture  
Supreme—when, locked in one another's arms,  
They glowed with brothers' love.

DIEGO. And in the heart  
It burns ; for ne'er their princely souls have stooped  
To mean disguise.

ISABELLA. Now, too, their bosoms wake  
To gentler thoughts, and own the softening sway  
Of Love. No more their hot impetuous youth  
Revels in liberty untamed, and spurns  
Restraint of Law—attempered passion's self,  
With modest chaste reserve.

To thee, Diego,  
I will unfold my secret heart ; this hour  
Of feeling's opening bloom, expected long,  
Wakes boding fears : thou knowst to sudden rage  
Love stirs tumultuous breasts ;—and if this flame  
With jealousy should rouse the slumbering fires  
Of ancient hate—I shudder at the thought !  
If these discordant souls perchance have thrilled  
In fatal unison !—Enough—the clouds,  
That black with thundering menace o'er me hung,  
Are past ; some angel sped them tranquil by,  
And my enfranchised spirit breathes again !

DIEGO. Rejoice, my mistress ; for thy gentle sense,  
And soft prevailing art, more weal have wrought  
Than all thy husband's power. Be praise to thee  
And thy auspicious star !

ISABELLA. Yes ! fortune smiled ;  
Nor light the task, so long with apt disguise  
To veil the cherished secret of my heart,  
And cheat my ever-jealous lord : more hard  
To stifle mighty Nature's pleading voice,  
That, like a prisoned fire, for ever strove  
To rend its confines.

DIEGO. All shall yet be well ;  
Fortune, propitious to our hopes, gave pledge  
Of bliss that time will show.

ISABELLA.

I praise not yet

My natal star, while darkening o'er my fate  
 This mystery hangs : too well the dire mischance  
 Tells of the Fiend whose never slumbering rage  
 Pursues our house. Now list what I have done,  
 And praise or blame me as thou wilt ; from thee  
 My bosom guards no secret :—ill I brook  
 This dull repose, while swift o'er land and sea  
 My sons unwearied track their sister's flight,  
 Yes ! I have sought—Heaven counsels oft, when vain  
 All mortal aid.

DIEGO.

What I may know, my Mistress,

Declare.

ISABELLA.

On Etna's solitary height

A reverend Hermit dwells ;—benamed of old,  
 The Mountain Seer ;—who to the realms of light  
 More near abiding than the toilsome race  
 Of mortals here below, with purer air  
 Has cleansed each earthly grosser sense away ;  
 And from the lofty peak of gathered years,  
 As from his mountain home, with downward glance  
 Surveys the crooked paths of worldly strife.  
 To him are known the fortunes of our house ;  
 Oft has the holy Sage besought response  
 From Heaven, and many a curse with earnest prayer  
 Averted : thither at my bidding flew,  
 On wings of youthful haste, a messenger,  
 To ask some tidings of my child : each hour  
 I wait his homeward footsteps.

DIEGO.

If mine eyes

Deceive me not, he comes ; and well his speed  
 Has earned thy praise.

MESSENGER, ISABELLA, DIEGO.

ISABELLA (to MESSENGER).

Now speak, and nothing hide

Of weal or woe : be Truth upon thy lips !

What tidings bear'st thou from the mountain Seer ?

MESS. . His answer, " Quick, retrace thy steps—the lost one  
 Is found."

ISABELLA.           Auspicious tongue! Celestial sounds  
Of peace and joy! thus ever to my vows,  
Thrice honoured Sage, thy kindly message spoke!  
But say, which heaven-directed brother traced  
My daughter?

MESSENGER.           'Twas thy eldest born that found  
The deep-secluded maid.

ISABELLA.                           Is it Don Manuel  
That gives her to my arms? Oh, he was ever  
The child of blessing! Tell me, hast thou borne  
My offering to the aged man?—the tapers  
To burn before his Saint? for gifts, the prize  
Of worldly hearts, the man of God disdains.

MRS. . He took the torches from my hands in silence,  
And stepping to the altar—where the lamp  
Burned to his Saint—illumed them at its fire,  
And instant set in flames the hermit cell,  
Where he has honoured God these ninety years!

ISAB. . What hast thou said? What horrors fright my soul?

MRS. . And three times shrieking "Wo!" with downward  
course,

He fled; but silent with uplifted arm  
Beckoned me not to follow, nor regard him!  
So hither I have hastened, terror sped.

ISAB. . O, I am tossed amid the surge again  
Of doubt and anxious fears; thy tale appals  
With ominous sounds of ill. My daughter found—  
Thou say'st; and by my eldest born, Don Manuel?  
The tidings ne'er shall bless, that heralded  
This deed of woe!

MESSENGER.           My Mistress! look around,  
Behold the hermit's message to thine eyes  
Fulfilled. Some charm deludes my sense, or hither  
Thy daughter comes, girt by the warlike train  
Of thy two sons!

[BEATRICE is carried in by the Second Chorus  
on a litter, and placed in the front of the stage.  
She is still without perception, and motionless.

ISABELLA, DIEGO, MESSENGER, BEATRICE.

*Chorus* (BOHEMUND, ROGER, HIPPOLYTE, and the other nine followers of DON CÆSAR).

*Chorus* (BOHEMUND). Here at thy feet we lay  
The maid, obedient to our Lord's command :  
'Twas thus he spoke—"Conduct her to my mother;  
And tell her that her son, Don Cæsar, sends her!"

ISABELLA (*is advancing towards her with outstretched arms, and starts back in horror*).

Heavens! she is motionless and pale!

*Chorus* (BOHEMUND). She lives,  
She will awake, but give her time to rouse  
From the dread shock that holds each sense enthralled.

ISAB. . My daughter! Child of all my cares and pains!  
And is it thus I see thee once again?  
Thus thou returnest to thy father's halls!  
O let my breath relume thy vital spark;  
Yes! I will strain thee to a mother's arms,  
And hold thee fast—till, from the frost of death  
Released, thy life-warm current throbs again

[*To the Chorus.*]

Where hast thou found her? Speak! What dire mis-  
chance

Has caused this sight of woe?

*Chorus* (BOHEMUND). My lips are dumb!  
Ask not of me: thy son will tell thee all—  
Don Cæsar—for 'tis he that sends her.

ISABELLA. Tell me,  
Would'st thou not say Don Manuel?

*Chorus* (BOHEMUND). 'Tis Don Cæsar  
That sends her to thee.

ISABELLA (*to the MESSENGER*). How declared the Seer?  
Speak! Was it not Don Manuel?

MESSENGER. 'Twas he!  
Thy elder born.

ISABELLA. Be blessings on his head  
Whiche'er it be; to him I owe a daughter.  
Alas! that in this blissful hour, so long  
Expected, long implored, some envious Fiend  
Should mar my joy! Oh, I must stem the tide

Of nature's transport! In her childhood's home  
 I see my daughter; me she knows not—heeds not—  
 Nor answers to a mother's voice of love!  
 Ope, ye dear eyelids—hands be warm—and heave  
 Thou lifeless bosom with responsive throbs  
 To mine! 'Tis she!—Diego, look! 'tis Beatrice!  
 The long-concealed—the lost—the rescued one!  
 Before the world I claim her for my own!

*Chorus* (BOHEMUND).

New signs of terror to my boding soul  
 Are pictured;—in amazement lost I stand!  
 What light shall pierce this gloom of mystery?

ISABELLA (*to the Chorus, who exhibit marks of confusion and embarrassment*).

O ye hard hearts! Ye rude unpitying men!  
 A mother's transport from your breasts of steel  
 Rebounds, as from the rocks the heaving surge!  
 I look around your train, nor mark one glance  
 Of soft regard. Where are my sons? Oh tell me  
 Why come they not, and from their beaming eyes  
 Speak comfort to my soul? For here environed,  
 I stand amid the desert's raging brood,  
 Or monsters of the deep!

DIEGO. She opes her eyes!

She moves! She lives!

ISABELLA. She lives! On me be thrown

Her earliest glance!

DIEGO. See! They are closed again—

She shudders!

ISABELLA (*to the Chorus*).

Quick! Retire—your aspect frights her.  
 [*Chorus steps back.*]

BOHEM. Well pleased I shun her sight.

DIEGO. With outstretched eyes,  
 And wonderstruck, she seems to measure thee.

BEAT. . Not strange those lineaments—where am I?

ISABELLA. Slowly  
 Her sense returns.

DIEGO. Behold! upon her knees

She sinks.

BEATRICE. O angel visage of my mother!

ISAB. . Child of my heart!

BEATRICE. See! kneeling at thy feet  
The guilty one!

ISABELLA. I hold thee in my arms!  
Enough—forgotten all!

DIEGO. Look in my face,  
Canst thou remember me?

BEATRICE. The reverend brows  
Of honest old Diego!

ISABELLA. Faithful guardian  
Of thy young years.

BEATRICE. And am I once again  
With kindred?

ISABELLA. Nought but death shall part us more!

BEAT. . Will thou ne'er send me to the stranger?

ISABELLA. Never!  
Fate is appeased.

BEATRICE. And am I next thy heart?  
And was it all a dream—a hideous dream?  
My mother! at my feet he fell!—I know not  
What brought me hither—yet 'tis well.—O bliss!  
That I am safe in thy protecting arms;  
They would have ta'en me to the Princess Mother  
Sooner to death!

ISABELLA. My daughter, calm thy fears;  
Messina's Princess—

BEATRICE. Name her not again!  
At that ill-omened sound the chill of death  
Creeps through my trembling frame.

ISABELLA. My child! but hear me—

BEAT. . She has two sons by mortal hate dissevered,  
Don Manuel and Don Cæsar—

ISABELLA. 'Tis myself!  
Behold thy mother!

BEATRICE. Have I heard thee? Speak!

ISAB. . I am thy mother, and Messina's Princess!

BEAT. . Art thou Don Manuel's and Don Cæsar's mother?

ISAB. . And thine! They are thy brethren whom thou nam'st.

BEAT. . O gleam of horrid light!

ISABELLA. What troubles thee?  
Say, whence this strange emotion?



BEATRICE.

Yes! 'twas they!

Now I remember all; no dream deceived me,  
 They met—'tis fearful truth! Unhappy men!—  
 Where have ye hid him?

*She rushes towards the Chorus: they turn away  
 from her. A funeral march is heard in the  
 distance.*

Chorus.

Horror! Horror!

ISABELLA.

Hid!

Speak—who is hid? and what is true? Ye stand  
 In silent dull amaze—as tho' ye fathomed  
 Her words of mystery!—In your faltering tones—  
 Your brows—I read of horrors yet unknown,  
 That would refrain my tongue! What is it? Tell me!  
 I will know all! Why fix ye on the doo,  
 That awe-struck gaze? What mournful music sounds?  
*[The march is heard nearer.*

Chorus (BOHEMUND).

It comes! it comes! and all shall be declared  
 With terrible voice. My Mistress! steel thy heart;  
 Be firm, and bear with courage what awaits thee—  
 For more than woman's soul thy destined griefs  
 Demand.

ISABELLA.

What comes? and what awaits me? Hark!  
 With fearful tones the death-wail smites mine ear—  
 It echoes thro' the house! Where are my sons?

*[The first Semichorus brings in the body of DON  
 MANUEL on a bier, which is placed at the side  
 of the stage. A black pall is spread over it.*

ISABELLA, BEATRICE, DIEGO.

*Both Choruses.**First Chorus (CAJETAN).*

With Sorrow in his train,  
 From street to street the King of Terror glides;  
 With stealthy foot, and slow,  
 He creeps where'er the fleeting race  
 Of man abides!

In turn at every gate  
Is heard the dreaded knock of Fate,  
The message of unutterable woe !

## BERENGAR.

When, in the sere  
And Autumn leaves decayed,  
The mournful forest tells how quickly fade  
The glories of the year !  
When in the silent tomb opprest,  
Frail man, with weight of days,  
Sinks to his tranquil rest ;  
Contented Nature but obeys  
Her everlasting law,—  
The general doom awakes no shuddering awe !  
But, mortals, oh ! prepare  
For mightier ills : with ruthless hand,  
Fell murder cuts the holy band—  
The kindred tie : insatiate Death,  
With unrelenting rage,  
Bears to his bark the flower of blooming age !

## CAJETAN.

When clouds athwart the lowering sky  
Are driven—when bursts with hollow moan  
The thunder's peal—our trembling bosoms own  
The might of awful Destiny !  
Yet oft the lightning's glare  
Darts sudden thro' the cloudless air :—  
Then in thy short delusive day  
Of bliss, oh ! dread the treacherous snare ;  
Nor prize the fleeting goods and vain,  
The flowers that bloom but to decay !  
Nor wealth, nor joy, nor aught but pain,  
Was e'er to mortal's lot secure :—  
Our first best lesson—to endure !

ISAD. . What shall I hear ? What horrors lurk beneath  
This funeral pall ?

*[She steps towards the bier, but suddenly pauses,  
and stands irresolute.]*

Some strange mysterious dread

Enthrals my sense. I would approach, and sudden  
The icecold grasp of terror holds me back!

[*To BEATRICE, who has thrown herself between  
her and the bier.*

Whate'er it be, I will unveil—

[*On raising the pall, she discovers the body of  
DON MANUEL.*

Eternal Powers! It is my son!

[*She stands in mute horror. BEATRICE sinks to  
the ground with a shriek of anguish near the  
bier.*

*Chorus.* Unhappy mother! 'tis thy son. Thy lips  
Have uttered what my faltering tongue denied!

*ISAB.* . My soul! My Manuel! O eternal grief!  
And is it thus I see thee? Thus thy life  
Has bought thy sister from the spoiler's rage?  
Where was thy brother? Could no arm be found  
To shield thee?—O be curst the hand that dug  
These gory wounds! A curse on her that bore  
The murderer of my son! Ten thousand curses  
On all their race!

*Chorus.*

Wo! Wo!

*ISABELLA.*

And is it thus

Ye keep your word, ye Gods? Is this your truth?  
Alas! for him that trusts with honest heart  
Your soothing wiles. Why have I hoped and trem-  
bled?

And this the issue of my prayers! Attend,  
Ye terror-stricken witnesses, that feed  
Your gaze upon my anguish; learn to know  
How warning visions cheat, and boding seers  
But mock our credulous hopes:—let none believe  
The voice of Heaven!

When in my teeming womb  
This daughter lay, her father, in a dream,  
Saw from his nuptial couch two laurels grow,  
And in the midst a lily all in flames,  
That catching swift the boughs and knotted stems,  
Burst forth with crackling rage, and o'er the house  
Spread in one mighty sea of fire. Perplexed  
By this terrific dream, my husband sought  
The counsels of the mystic art, and thus

Pronounced the Sage—"If I a daughter bore,  
The murderess of his sons, the destined spring  
Of ruin to our house, the baleful child  
Should see the light."

*Chorus* (CAJETAN and BOHEMUND).

What hast thou said, my Mistress?

Wo! Wo!

ISABELLA. For this her ruthless father spoke  
The dire behest of death. I rescued her,  
The innocent, the doomed one:—from my arms  
The babe was torn: to stay the curse of Heaven,  
And save my sons, the mother gave her child;  
And now by robber hands her brother falls;—  
My child is guiltless;—O, she slew him not!

*Chorus.* Wo! Wo!

ISAB. . No trust the fabling readers of the stars  
Have e'er deserved! Hear how another spoke  
With comfort to my soul, and him I deemed  
Inspired to voice the secrets of the skies!  
"My daughter should unite in love the hearts  
Of my dissevered sons:"—and thus their tales  
Of curse and blessing on her head, proclaim  
Each other's falsehood. No! she ne'er has brought  
A curse—the innocent! nor time was given  
The blessed promise to fulfil! Their tongues  
Were false alike—their boasted art is vain—  
With trick of words they cheat our credulous ears,  
Or are themselves deceived! Nought ye may know  
Of dark futurity, the sable streams  
Of Hell the fountain of your hidden lore,  
Or yon bright spring of everlasting light!

*First Chorus* (CAJETAN).

Wo! Wo! thy tongue refrain!

Oh, pause, nor thus with impious rage

The might of Heaven profane;

The holy oracles are wise—

Expect with awe thy coming destinies!

ISAB. . My tongue shall speak as prompts my swelling heart;  
My griefs shall cry to Heaven! Why do we lift  
Our suppliant hands, and at the sacred shrines  
Kneel to adore? Good easy dupes! What win we  
From faith and pious awe?—to touch with prayers

The tenants of yon azure realms on high,  
 Were hard as with an arrow's point to pierce  
 The silvery moon. Hid is the womb of Time,  
 Impregnable to mortal glance, and deaf  
 The adamantine walls of Heaven rebound  
 The voice of anguish:—O 'tis one, whate'er  
 The flight of birds—the aspect of the stars!  
 The Book of Nature is a maze—a dream  
 The Sage's art,—and every sign a falsehood!

*Second Chorus (BOHEMUND).*

Wo! Wo! Ill fated woman, stay  
 Thy maddening blasphemies;  
 Thou but disown'st, with purblind eyes,  
 The flaming Orb of day!  
 Confess the Gods,—they dwell on high—  
 They circle thee with awful majesty!

*All the Knights.*

Confess the Gods—they dwell on high—  
 They circle thee with awful majesty!

BEATRICE.

Why hast thou saved thy daughter, and defied  
 The curse of Heaven, that marked me in thy womb  
 The child of woe? Short-sighted mother!—vain  
 Thy little arts, to cheat the doom declared  
 By the all-wise interpreters, that knit  
 The far and near; and, with prophetic ken,  
 See the late harvest spring in times unborn.  
 O thou hast brought destruction on thy race,  
 Withholding from the avenging Gods their prey;  
 Threefold, with new embittered rage, they ask  
 The direful penalty; no thanks thy boon  
 Of life deserves—the fatal gift was sorrow!

*Second Chorus (BERENGAR) looking towards the door with  
 signs of agitation.*

Hark to the sound of dread!  
 The rattling brazen din I hear!  
 Of hell-born snakes the hissing tones are near!  
 Yes—'tis the Furies' tread!

## CAJETAN.

In crumbling ruin wide,  
 Fall, fall, thou roof, and sink thou trembling floor,  
 That bear'st the dread unearthly stride!  
 Ye sable damp's arise!  
 Mount from the abyss in smoky spray,  
 And pall the brightness of the day!  
 Vanish, ye guardian Powers!  
 They come! The avenging Deities!

---

DON CÆSAR, ISABELLA, BEATRICE. *The Chorus.*

*On the entrance of DON CÆSAR, the Chorus station themselves before him imploringly. He remains standing alone in the centre of the stage.*

BEAT. . Alas! 'tis he—

ISABELLA (*stepping to meet him*).

My Cæsar! O, my son!  
 And is it thus I meet thee? Look! Behold!  
 The crime of hand accurst!—

[*She leads him to the corpse.*]

*First Chorus* (CAJETAN, BERENGAR).

Break forth once more  
 Ye wounds! Flow, flow, in swarthy flood,  
 Thou streaming gore!

ISAB. . Shuddering with earnest gaze, and motionless,  
 Thou stand'st:—yes! there my hopes repose, and all  
 That earth has of thy brother; in the bud  
 Nipp'd is your concord's tender flower, nor ever  
 With beauteous fruit shall glad a mother's eyes.

DON C. Be comforted; thy sons, with honest heart,  
 To peace aspired, but Heaven's decree was blood!

ISAB. . I know thou lovedst him well; I saw between ye,  
 With joy, the hands of nature sweetly twined;  
 Thou wouldst have borne him in thy heart of hearts,  
 With rich atonement of long wasted years!  
 But see—fell Murder thwarts thy dear design,  
 And nought remains but vengeance!

DON CÆSAR.

Come, my mother,

This is no place for thee. Oh, haste and leave  
This sight of woe! [*He endeavours to drag her away.*]

ISABELLA (*throwing herself into his arms*).

Thou liv'st! I have a son!

BEAT. . Alas! my mother!

DON CÆSAR.

On this faithful bosom

Weep out thy pains;—nor lost thy son,—his love  
Shall dwell immortal in thy Cæsar's breast.

*First Chorus* (CAJETAN, BERENGAR, MANFRED).

Break forth, ye wounds!—

Dumb witnesses!—the truth proclaim;

Flow fast, thou gory stream!

ISABELLA (*clasping the hands of DON CÆSAR and BEATRICE*).

My children!

DON CÆSAR.

Oh, 'tis ecstasy! my mother.

To see her in thy arms!—henceforth in love

A daughter—sister—

ISABELLA (*interrupting him*).

Thou hast kept thy word,

My son;—to thee I owe the rescued one;

Yes, thou hast sent her—

DON CÆSAR (*in astonishment*).

Whom, my mother, sayst thou,

That I have sent?

ISABELLA.

She stands before thine eyes—

Thy sister.

DON CÆSAR.

She! My sister?

ISABELLA.

Ay, what other?

DON C. My sister!

ISABELLA.

Thou hast sent her to me!

DON CÆSAR.

Horror!

His sister, too!

CHORUS.

Woe! woe!

BEATRICE.

Alas! my mother!

ISAB. . Speak! I am all amaze!

DON CÆSAR.

Be curst the day

When I was born!

ISABELLA.

Eternal Powers!

DON CÆSAR.

Accurst

The womb that bore me ; curst thy secret arts,  
 The spring of all this woe ; instant to crush thee,  
 Though the dread thunder swept—ne'er should this  
     arm

Refrain the bolts of death :—I slew my brother !  
 Hear it and tremble ! in her arms I found him—  
 She was my love, my chosen bride ;—and he—  
 My brother—in her arms ! Thou hast heard all !  
 If it be true—oh, if she be my sister—  
 And his !—then I have done a deed that mocks  
 The power of sacrifice and prayers to ope  
 The gates of Mercy to my soul !

*Chorus (BOHEMUND).*

The tidings on thy heart dismayed  
 Have burst, and nought remains ; behold !  
 'Tis come, nor long delayed,  
 Whate'er the warning seers foretold :  
 They spoke the message from on high,  
 Their lips proclaimed resistless destiny !  
 The mortal shall the curse fulfil,  
 Who seeks to turn predestined ill.

ISAB. . The Gods have done their worst ; if they be true  
 Or false, 'tis one—for nothing they can add  
 To this—the measure of their rage is full.  
 Why should I tremble that have nought to fear ?  
 My darling son lies murdered, and the living  
 I call my son no more. Oh ! I have borne  
 And nourished at my breast a basilisk  
 That stung my best-loved child. My daughter, haste,  
 And leave this house of horrors—I devote it  
 To the avenging Fiends !—In evil hour,  
 'Twas crime that brought me hither, and of crime  
 The victim I depart. Unwillingly  
 I came—in sorrow I have lived—despairing  
 I quit these halls ; on me, the innocent,  
 Descends this weight of woe ! Enough—'tis shown  
 That Heaven is just, and oracles are true !  
     *[Exit, followed by DIEGO.]*



BEATRICE, DON CÆSAR, *The Chorus.*

DON CÆSAR (*detaining BEATRICE*).

My sister, wouldst thou leave me? On this head  
A mother's curse may fall—a brother's blood  
Cry with accusing voice to Heaven—all Nature  
Invoke eternal vengeance on my soul—  
But thou—Oh! curse me not—I cannot bear it!

[BEATRICE *points with averted eyes to the body.*  
I have not slain thy lover! 'twas thy brother,  
And mine, that fell beneath my sword; and near  
As the departed one, the living owns  
The ties of blood: remember, too, 'tis I  
That most a sister's pity need—for pure  
His spirit winged its flight, and I am guilty!

[BEATRICE *bursts into an agony of tears.*  
Weep! I will blend my tears with thine—nay, more,  
I will avenge thy brother; but the lover—  
Weep not for him—thy passionate yearning tears  
My inmost heart. Oh! from the boundless depths  
Of our affliction, let me gather this,  
The last and only comfort—but to know  
That we are dear alike. One lot fulfilled  
Has made our rights and wretchedness the same;  
Entangled in one snare we fall together,  
Three hapless victims of un pitying Fate,  
And share the mournful privilege of tears.  
But when I think that for the lover more  
Than for the brother bursts thy sorrow's tide,  
Then rage and envy mingle with my pain,  
And Hope's last balm forsakes my withering soul!—  
Nor joyful, as beseems, can I requite  
This injured Shade:—yet after him content  
To Mercy's throne my contrite spirit shall fly,  
Sped by this hand—if dying I may know  
That in one urn our ashes shall repose,  
With pious office of a sister's care.

[*He throws his arms around her with passionate tenderness.*

I loved thee, as I ne'er had loved before,  
When thou wert strange; and that I bear the curse

Of brother's blood, 'tis but because I loved thee  
 With measureless transport : love was all my guilt.  
 But now thou art my sister, and I claim  
 Soft pity's tribute.

*[He regards her with inquiring glances, and an  
 air of painful suspense—then turns away with  
 vehemence.]*

No ! in this dread presence  
 I cannot bear these tears—my courage flies,  
 And doubt distracts my soul. Go, weep in secret—  
 Leave me in error's maze—but never, never,  
 Behold me more : I will not look again  
 On thee, nor on thy mother. Oh ! how passion  
 Laid bare her secret heart ! She never loved me !  
 She mourned her best-loved son—that was her cry  
 Of grief—and nought was mine but show of fondness !  
 And thou art false as she ! make no disguise—  
 Recoil with horror from my sight—this form  
 Shall never shock thee more—begone for ever ! *[Exit.]*

*[She stands irresolute in a tumult of conflicting  
 passions—then tears herself from the spot.]*

*Chorus (CAJETAN).*

Happy the man—his lot I prize—  
 That far from pomps and turmoil vain,  
 Child-like on Nature's bosom lies  
 Amid the stillness of the plain.  
 My heart is sad in the princely hall,  
 When from the towering pride of state,  
 I see with headlong ruin fall,  
 How swift ! the good and great !

And he—from Fortune's storms at rest—  
 Smiles, in the quiet haven laid,  
 Who, timely warned, has owned how blest  
 The refuge of the cloistered shade ;  
 To honour's race has bade farewell,  
 Its idle joys and empty shows ;  
 Insatiate wishes learned to quell,  
 And lulled in Wisdom's calm repose :—

No more shall Passion's maddening brood  
 Impel the busy scenes to try,  
 Nor on his peaceful cell intrude  
 The form of sad Humanity !  
 'Mid crowds and strife each mortal ill  
 Abides—the grisly train of woe  
 Shuns like the Pest the breezy hill,  
 To haunt the smoky marts below.

BERENGAR, BOHEMUND, *and* MANFRED.

On the mountains is freedom! the breath of delay  
 Never sullies the fresh flowing air;  
 O Nature is perfect wherever we stray;  
 'Tis man that deforms it with care.

*The whole Chorus repeats.*

On the mountains is freedom, &c., &c.

DON CÆSAR, *the Chorus.*

DON CÆSAR (*more collected*).

I use the princely rights—'tis the last time—  
 To give this body to the ground, and pay  
 Fit honours to the dead. So mark, my friends,  
 My bosom's firm resolve, and quick fulfil  
 Your lord's behest. Fresh in your memory lives  
 The mournful pomp, when to the tomb ye bore  
 So late my royal sire; scarce in these halls  
 Are stilled the echoes of the funeral wail;—  
 Another corse succeeds, and in the grave  
 Weighs down its fellow-dust—almost our torch,  
 With borrowed lustre from the last, may pierce  
 The monumental gloom; and on the stair,  
 Blend in one throng confused each mourning train.  
 Then in the sacred royal dome that guards  
 The ashes of my sire, prepare with speed  
 The funeral rites; unseen of mortal eye,  
 And noiseless be your task—let all be graced,  
 As then, with circumstance of kingly state.

BOHEM. My Prince, it shall be quickly done; for still



Of dire misfortune, that with maddening rage  
Bursts o'er your house, were nobler than to pile  
Accumulated woe.

DON CÆSAR.                               The curse of old  
Shall die with me! Death self-imposed alone  
Can break the chain of Fate.

CAJETAN.                               Thou ow'st thyself  
A sovereign to this orphaned land, by thee  
Robbed of its other lord!

DON CÆSAR.                               The avenging Gods  
Demand their prey—some other Deity  
May guard the living!

CAJETAN.                               Wide as e'er the sun  
In glory beams, the realm of Hope extends;  
But—Oh remember!—nothing may we gain  
From Death!

DON CÆSAR.                               Remember thou thy vassal's duty;—  
Remember, and be silent! Leave to me  
To follow, as I list, the Spirit of power  
That leads me to the goal. No happy one  
May look into my breast:—but if thy Prince  
Owns not a subject's homage, dread at least  
The murderer!—the accurst!—and to the head  
Of the unhappy—sacred to the Gods—  
Give honours due. The pangs that rend my soul—  
What I have suffered—what I feel—have left  
No place for earthly thoughts!

DONNA ISABELLA, DON CÆSAR, *The Chorus.*

ISABELLA (*enters with hesitating steps, and looks irresolutely  
towards DON CÆSAR; at last she approaches,  
and addresses him with collected tones*).

I thought mine eyes should ne'er behold thee more;—  
Thus I had vowed despairing! Oh, my son!  
How quickly all a mother's stern resolves  
Melt into air! 'Twas but the cry of rage  
That stifled Nature's pleading voice; but now  
What tidings of mysterious import call me  
Forth from the desolate chambers of my sorrow?

Shall I believe it? Is it true?—one day  
 Robs me of both my sons?

*Chorus.*

Behold! with willing steps and free,  
 Thy son prepares to tread  
 The paths of dark eternity—  
 The silent mansions of the dead.  
 My prayers are vain; but thou, with power confest  
 Of nature's holiest passion, storm his breast!

ISAB. . I call the curses back—that in the frenzy  
 Of blind despair on thy beloved head  
 I poured. A mother may not curse the child  
 That from her nourishing breast drew life, and gave  
 Sweet recompense for all her travail past:  
 Heaven would not hear the impious vows; they fell  
 With quick rebound, and heavy with my tears,  
 Down from the flaming vault.

Live! live! my son!

For I may rather bear to look on thee—  
 The murderer of one child—than weep for both!

DON C. Heedless and vain, my mother, are thy prayers  
 For me and for thyself;—I have no place  
 Among the living:—if thine eyes may brook  
 The murderer's sight abhorred—I could not bear  
 The mute reproach of thy eternal sorrow.

ISAB. . Silent or loud, my son, reproach shall never  
 Disturb thy breast—ne'er in these halls shall sound  
 The voice of wailing, gently on my tears  
 My griefs shall flow away:—the sport alike  
 Of pitiless Fate, together we will mourn,  
 And veil the deed of blood.

DON CÆSAR (*with a faltering voice, and taking her hand*).

Thus it shall be,

My mother—thus with silent, gentle woe  
 Thy grief shall fade: but when one common tomb  
 The murderer and his victim closes round—  
 When o'er our dust one monumental stone  
 Is rolled—the curse shall cease—thy love no more  
 Unequal bless thy sons: the precious tears  
 Thine eyes of beauty weep, shall sanctify

Alike our memories. Yes! In death are quenched  
 The fires of rage; and Flashed owns subdued,  
 The mighty reconciler. Pity bends  
 An angel form above the funeral urn,  
 With weeping dear embrace. Then to the tomb  
 Stay not my passage.—Oh! forbid me not,  
 Thus with atoning sacrifice to quell  
 The curse of Heaven.

ISABELLA.

All Christendom is rich  
 In shrines of mercy, where the troubled heart  
 May find repose—Oh! many a heavy burden  
 Have sinners in Loretto's mansion laid;  
 And Heaven's peculiar blessing breathes around  
 The grave that has redeemed the world!—The prayers  
 Of the devout are precious—fraught with store  
 Of grace, they win forgiveness from the skies;—  
 And on the soil by gory murder stained  
 Shall rise the purifying fane.

DON CÆSAR

We pluck  
 The arrow from the wound—but the torn heart  
 Shall ne'er be healed. Let him who can, drag on  
 A weary life of penance and of pain,  
 To cleanse the spot of everlasting guilt;—  
 I would not live the victim of despair;  
 No! I must meet with beaming eye the smile  
 Of happy ones, and breathe erect the air  
 Of liberty and joy. While yet alike  
 We shared thy love, then o'er my days of youth  
 Pale Envy cast his withering shade; and now,  
 Think'st thou my heart could brook the dearer ties  
 That bind thee in thy sorrow to the dead?  
 Death, in his undecaying palace throned,  
 To the pure diamond of perfect virtue  
 Sublimes the mortal, and with chastening fire  
 Each gathered stain of frail humanity  
 Purges and burns away: high as the stars  
 Tower o'er this earthly sphere, he soars above me;  
 And as by ancient hate dissevered long,  
 Brethren and equal denizens we lived,  
 So now my restless soul with envy pines,  
 That he has won from me the glorious prize





1 DONNA ISABELLA, DON CÆSAR, *and the Chorus.*

DON CÆSAR (*on seeing her, covers his face with his hands*).

My mother!

What hast thou done?

ISABELLA (*leading BEATRICE forwards*).

A mother's prayers are vain!

Kneel at his feet—conjure him—melt his heart!

Oh! bid him live!

DON CÆSAR.

Deceitful mother, thus

Thou triest thy son! And wouldst thou stir my soul

Again to passion's strife, and make the sun

Beloved once more, now when I tread the paths

Of everlasting night? See where he stands—

Angel of life!—and wondrous beautiful,

Shakes from his plenteous horn the fragrant store

Of golden fruits and flowers, that breathe around

Divinest airs of joy;—my heart awakes

In the warm sunbeam—hope returns, and life

Thrills in my breast anew.

ISABELLA (*to BEATRICE*).

Thou wilt prevail!

Or none! Implore him that he live, nor rob

The staff and comfort of our days.

BEATRICE.

The loved one

A sacrifice demands. Oh, let me die

To soothe a brother's shade! Yes, I will be

The victim! Ere I saw the light forewarned

To death, I live a wrong to Heaven! The curse

Pursues me still:—'twas I that slew thy son—

I waked the slumbering furies of their strife—

Be mine the atoning blood!

CAJETAN.

Ill-fated mother!

Impatient all thy children haste to doom,

And leave thee on the desolate waste alone

Of joyless life.

BEATRICE.

Oh, spare thy precious days

For Nature's band. Thy mother needs a son;

My brother, live for her! Light were the pang

To lose a daughter—but a moment shown,

Then snatched away!

DON CÆSAR (*with deep emotion*). 'Tis one to live or die,

Blest with a sister's love!

BEATRICE.

Say—dost thou envy

Thy brother's ashes?

DON CÆSAR.

In thy grief he lives

A hallowed life!—my doom is death for ever!

BEAT. . My brother!

DON CÆSAR.

Sister! are thy tears for me?

BEAT. . Live for our mother!

DON CÆSAR (*dropping her hand, and stepping back*).

For our mother?

BEATRICE (*hiding her head in his breast*).

Live

For her and for thy sister!

Chorus (BOHEMUND).

She has won!

Resistless are her prayers. Despairing mother,

Awake to hope again—his choice is made!

Thy son shall live!

[*At this moment an anthem is heard. The folding doors are thrown open, and in the Church is seen the Catafalque erected, and the coffin surrounded with candlesticks.*]

DON CÆSAR (*turning to the coffin*). I will not rob thee, brother!

The sacrifice is thine:—Hark! from the tomb,

Mightier than mother's tears, or sister's love,

Thy voice resistless cries:—my arms enfold

A treasure, potent with celestial joys,

To deck this earthly sphere, and make a lot

Worthy the Gods! but shall I live in bliss,

While in the tomb thy sainted innocence

Sleeps unavenged? Thou, Ruler of our days,

All just—all wise—let not the world behold

Thy partial care! I saw her tears!—enough—

They flowed for me! I am content: my brother!

I come!

[*He stabs himself with a dagger, and falls dead at his sister's feet. She throws herself into her mother's arms.*]

Chorus, CAJETAN (*after a deep silence*).

In dread amaze I stand, nor know

If I should mourn his fate. One truth revealed

Speaks in my breast;—no good supreme is life;

But of all earthly ills the chief is—Guilt!

END.

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